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BY

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New College, London

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INTRODUCTION

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY—naturally divided into two sections, the theology of the Old Testament and that of the New—may be best described by comparison with the more familiar subject of study, Systematic Theology, from which it will be seen to differ in two or three clearly marked features. First, in its aim. It does not attempt to state truth absolutely: it seeks to elucidate a certain presentation of truth. Second, in its materials. These are confined to the pages of the Bible; while Systematic Theology, even when relying mainly on Scripture, appeals to nature, conscience, reason, experience, etc., for the confirmation of its results, if not for the data of its arguments. Third, in its method. The systematic theologian undertakes to balance and harmonise the truths of religion, in order to show their organic relationship in a compact body of Divinity; the student of Biblical Theology, on the other hand, proceeds to trace the development of revelation as this emerges through the successive books of Scripture, and to compare the various forms in which its ideas are conceived by the several teachers there represented. Thus it is less ambitious

than Systematic Theology; but then it admits of being more exact and certain. The literary and historical study of Biblical Theology should precede the more metaphysical speculations of Systematic Theology, because no just conception either of Judaism or of Christianity can be obtained before we have come to perceive the thoughts of the inspired writers in their original purity. Here we have the stream at its fountain-head.

The nature of the subject indicates the right order of procedure for the treatment of it. Clearly the familiar custom of starting with the definition of a doctrine, and then hunting through the Bible for proof-texts, which are often fragmentary utterances torn out of all connection with their context and flung together regardless of their authorship and the age in which they were written, is out of place here. We must travel along the very opposite path; we must not commence with any formulated dogma; though we may endeavour to lead up to doctrine—*i.e.*, to whatever truth the lines of Scripture teaching may direct us to. Therefore we have to map out the field, not according to the relations of ideas, but according to the character and work of the several teachers and writers. Thus, in approaching the theology of the New Testament, as one of the two branches of Biblical Theology, we must first consider the fundamental teaching of Jesus Christ. Then it will be requisite for us to examine the separate teachings of the Apostles—St. James, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. John, etc., observing these in the speeches and writings that have come down to us as positive

statements of truth, and also considering them in their mutual relations as indicative of common agreement or of divergence between different schools in the early Church, as the case may be. Further, this study should follow a chronological order as far as possible, so that we may be able to discern whether there is any such thing as a development of doctrine, a progress and growth of revelation, in the New Testament. It is needless to say that so great a task as is here suggested cannot be accomplished within the limits of so small a book as this. All that can be attempted is to indicate the outlines of the subject and its salient points.

In its origin Christianity was not a totally new revelation of truth bursting on a world absolutely ignorant of Divine things. It assumed a considerable knowledge of religion on the part of the people among whom it arose, and it availed itself of that knowledge so as to build on a foundation already laid. It was not an accident that the new teaching appeared in the land of Israel, and that its exponents were Jews. The essential ideas of the Old Testament are presupposed in the New Testament. The lofty Jewish monotheism, the incorporeal spirituality and the kingly supremacy of God, and the corresponding horror of Nature-worship—above all, the holiness of God, *i.e.*, His separation from impurity—are all ideas carried over from Judaism to Christianity. The blending of morality with religion, which distinguishes Christianity from most pagan cults, is also a distinctive mark of Judaism. The mercy of God to sinners, His compassion, longsuffering, and redeeming

love, forgiving the penitent and rescuing the lost, are seen in the Old Testament. Lastly, the essentially Christian thought of a King and Saviour, sent by God to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth, deliver the needy, and finally judge the nations, comes down from Old Testament prophecy, and is accepted by our Lord, who claims to be this Saviour and King, the long-looked-for Messiah. In regard to all these ideas the New Testament absorbs and confirms the highest thought of the Old Testament, while it also goes further, correcting what is narrow and materialistic in Judaism, and showing its own richer truth against the background of the earlier religion.

The relation of New Testament theology to Jewish notions current at the time of Christ is much less friendly. Just as the Reformers carried religion back from the corruptions of the Middle Ages nearer to the primitive conception of it in the New Testament, Jesus Christ and His Apostles may be said to have turned the thoughts of men to the Old Testament, away from the perversions of later Judaism. Not one of the schools of theology prevalent in Palestine during our Lord's earthly life can be regarded as in any way the parent of Christianity. The most popular was that of the Pharisees: in its spiritual conception of the nature of man, this school found more sympathy from Christ than that of the worldly and materialistic Sadducees; but its slavery to puerile rabbinical traditions, and its occupation with petty externals, to the neglect of great moral and religious principles, rendered it sterile of spiritual fruit, and roused the most uncompromising antagonism on the

part of the new religion. Some have thought they could trace the origin of Christianity in the doctrines and practices of the Essenes. Now, there is much in the unworldliness, the brotherliness, and the passion for purity characteristic of this humble sect, in its lonely retreat by the Dead Sea, that suggests to us the brotherly love, the simple living, and the pure character of the Christian ideal. But the unpractical separation from the world, the childishly scrupulous asceticism, and the intense importance attached to ceremonial ablutions that marked the Essenes, are all directly opposite to New Testament teaching and practice. Essenism was essentially narrow, sectarian, timorous; it could never step forth into the sunlight, attack great cities, and become a world-wide religion. Moreover, historically there is no observable connection between this harmless, but unfruitful, attempt to escape from the evils of the times, and the energetic and victorious career of Christianity. New Testament theology may be linked on to Old Testament theology; but it cannot be attributed to the influences of contemporary Jewish thought.

It is to be observed, however, that in two or three details New Testament teaching absorbs and reproduces recently developed Jewish ideas. First, the doctrine of the resurrection and future judgment, with the conception of the intermediate state in Hades, divided into paradise or Abraham's bosom on the one side, and Gehenna on the other, grew up and was fully elaborated subsequent to the Old Testament times, although the germs of it were in the ancient Scriptures. These teachings passed over

into Christianity, with certain important modifications. Then the conception of the kingdom of God with the great work of the Messiah described in the so-called Psalms of Solomon and in the Book of Enoch represents a late development of Messianic ideas subsequent to the close of the prophetic era. An entirely new character was given to the thought of the kingdom of God by our Lord; still the framework was found in this Jewish thought. Further, the great value attached to inspired Scripture by later Judaism is reflected in the New Testament references to the law and the prophets; and although the Christian writers avoided the extravagances of the allegorical method of interpretation into which not only the philosophising Alexandrian Philo fell, but the rabbis of Palestine also in a less degree, still a tincture of something similar may be detected occasionally in St. Paul. Other points of contact might be adduced, but none of them amount to evidence of the vital connection of parent and child. In spirit and principle New Testament theology is not at all the outgrowth of contemporary Judaism.

Whether the Christian doctrines of the Apostles, and especially those of St. Paul, may be regarded as a result of Greek thought modifying Jewish traditions —as Pfleiderer maintains—must be considered later on when we are studying the apostolic writings.

The author of *Ecce Homo* opens his book with the statement, "The Christian Church sprang from a movement which was not begun by Christ." If these words refer to the seed or root of Christianity they go beyond the facts, for nothing could be more absurd

than to suppose that John the Baptist, and not Jesus Christ, was the founder of Christianity. But if they rather refer to the soil on which the new religion first appeared, they state an evident truth; and even as indicative of the initiation of a new movement to which not the originator, but the teacher second in time gave the real character—and this is what the author means—they suggest a correct, though less familiar, idea. Christianity first emerged on the crest of the wave of a great revival movement that preceded it and prepared for it. Jesus commenced His public life by taking the humble position of a disciple of John the Baptist, and His own earliest followers were gathered from the group of the most intimate companions of the wilderness prophet. It is necessary, then, to see what were John's teachings, especially in their relation to Christianity.

John the Baptist was a man of the Old Dispensation—the last of the prophets. But though he had not crossed the border, he stood on Pisgah and looked over into the promised land. All his preaching had a forward glance in preparation for the new age. Therefore, not only because our record of it is written in the Gospels, but because of its being the message of the herald of the kingdom, it belongs in some degree to New Testament theology.

It is not possible to connect the Baptist with any of the schools of Judaism. He was neither a Pharisee, nor a Sadducee, nor an Essene. Some of his habits may suggest his connection with the third school. His wilderness life, not so far from their retreat, his asceticism, and his use of water baptism, call to mind

the similar customs of the religious dwellers by the Dead Sea, and render it even probable that, to some extent, he purposely followed their example. On the other hand, certain of his habits seem almost designed to mark his difference from them. The Essenes made it a religious duty to dress in glistening white raiment; John's distinctive clothing was rough tent-cloth. They eschewed flesh; his diet, though frugal, was not vegetarian. They practised frequent ablutions; he instituted a single baptism. It looks as though his peculiar personal habits were rather moulded on the pattern of the Hebrew prophets, and especially on that of his great prototype Elijah; and indeed that he thus designedly set himself to show his mission to be that of the forerunner predicted by Malachi (Mal. iv. 5). At all events, he was successful in making an impression of strength and stern, self-denying severity by his singular demeanour, which was so striking that it even outlived the memory of his preaching (see Luke vii. 24, 25).

The surname which was given to John by his contemporaries is an indication of the importance attached by them to his practice of the rite of baptism. If we can trust to a tradition preserved by Maimonides, proselytes from the Gentiles were received into Judaism by baptism as well as circumcision and sacrificing. Possibly John may have been familiar with this usage. If so, the new end for which he employed the rite is the more significant. In calling Jews to be baptised, he treated them as they treated heathen converts—*i.e.*, he behaved to them as though they were outside the covenant. He urged

them to wash themselves of their old life, even if this were the life of law-observing Pharisees (see Matt. iii. 7),* and invited them to take an initial step in preparation for entrance into the kingdom of heaven. It is not difficult to see the meaning of this baptism. It looked two ways—backwards and forwards. (1) In relation to the past it signified *repentance.* All ceremonial ablutions are concerned with the removal of defilements. But John's teachings in regard to baptism are more profound than the conceptions of his contemporaries, many of whom were very rigorous in the practice of repeated washings (Mark vii. 3, 4). His rite was known as a "baptism of repentance" (*βάπτισμα μετανοίας*, Mark i. 4) and "for repentance" (*εἰς μετάνοιαν*, Matt. iii. 11), *i.e.*, a baptism that pointed to, that urged to, and so led to repentance. It was also regarded as a baptism "for forgiveness of sins" (*εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*, Mark i. 4). The forgiveness was dependent on repentance. Then, by being performed once for all, it signified not the simple washing off of the last chance fleck of defilement, but the thorough cleansing of the life, the wholesale repudiation of old ways—a more fundamental repentance than that of the ceremonialist with his daily anxiety about scruples. Here was spiritual teaching which went beyond the ritual bathing of the Essenes and the washing of hands and

* Maimonides is supported by Talmud traditions. See Lightfoot, *Horæ Hebraicæ*, on Matt. iii. 6. It has been objected that since our evidence is later than the origin of Christianity, the Jews may have borrowed from the Christians; but is it likely that they would have adopted the most significant rite of the religion they rejected?

culinary vessels by the Pharisees. When the disciple of John was plunged into the rushing flood of the Jordan he was taught to repent of his whole past life, as though to let it be carried right away from him by the swift waters on their course to the Dead Sea. (2) Looking forward, baptism signified *initiation*. This would be taught by the analogy of proselyte-baptism. Just as the new convert gave himself up to the Jewish faith and was received into the national communion, the disciple of John dedicated himself to the kingdom of heaven and was accepted as one who should be presented for membership when that kingdom appeared. It is important to observe that the candidate did not baptise himself. The rite was administered by the prophet. Claiming a Divine mission, John must have taught by this action both that God expects repentance and that God accepts penitents and receives those who rightly dedicate themselves. It is only in the second of these relations that our Lord, whose innocence was recognised by the Baptist (Matt. iii. 14), could have sought baptism. His desire to be baptised showed that to Him the chief meaning of this baptism of John was prospective—that it implied self-dedication and initiation.

What is vividly symbolised by his baptism is more clearly explained by the recorded preaching of John.

In the first place, the Baptist announced the approach of the kingdom of heaven. A vague impression of its nearness was already abroad. But John was the first definitely to proclaim its immediate advent. "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"—this is the starting-point of all his work. Hausrath supposes

that he went further, and writes, "Since the kingdom promised to all Israel was at their very doors, as was everywhere believed, and as all signs presaged, *he*, with great, heroic, prophetic resolution, will begin it." * At all events, he knew that it was not enough calmly to "wait for the consolation of Israel," like Simeon and Anna (Luke ii. 25). These simple old people in the temple could do little to expedite the advent of the kingdom; but the energetic prophet of the wilderness perceived that God only waited for His people's preparation. So he would go even further than Christ in one way—trying to take the kingdom of heaven "by violence," as our Lord said (Matt. xi. 12); while Jesus showed by all His teaching that it could only come silently and gradually, like the growth of spring.

Next, John warned the Jews of the certain punishment of sin in the advent of the kingdom. This was an alarming anticipation, quite alien to the common opinion of the unreflecting multitude. The Jews generally seem to have regarded the kingdom of God as a Divine rule in the midst of Israel from which the chosen people would reap boundless national prosperity and glory, while the Divine vengeance was to be poured out on the heads of their oppressors. John declared that the kingdom would bring judgment and punishment to Israel. His keen eye detected the gleam of the axe already lying at the very root of the tree, and only waiting for the hand of the Expected One to fell the fruitless trunk. In

* *New Testament Times:* Time of Jesus (Eng. Trans.), vol. i., p. 100.

this he was following the ideas of ancient prophecy, and especially those of his favourite prophet Malachi (Mal. ii. 12; iii. 2, 3; iv. 1, 5, 6). He revived the often-forgotten truth that God cannot be indifferent to sin simply because on former occasions He has shown favour to the sinner. So absorbed was John with the Vision of Judgment that he had too little perception of the gracious and healing blessings of the kingdom. But he saw discrimination in judgment. Following Malachi (iii. 3), he announced that there would be a refiner's fire destroying the dross, thereby plainly implying that the precious metal would be saved, and a winnower's fan that spares the wheat while scattering the chaff. Still, this is only judgment: it is not redemption.

Based on these two ideas—the idea of the advent of the kingdom and the idea of accompanying judgment—is the practical obligation to repent. The rabbis had taught that repentance must precede the coming of the Messiah; * but apparently they had only taught it in theory. John urged this truth upon his hearers with vehement earnestness, declaring that it could not be evaded by any privilege of birth or rank. Jews might plead that Abraham was their father; but, since God could raise up children for Abraham from the very stones of the wilderness (Luke iii. 8), He was not dependent upon the existence of the generation then living for the continuance of a chosen people. Scrupulous Pharisees, and Sadducees, though many of them of priestly rank, were really no better than a brood of vipers, such as the vermin

* See Reynolds, *John the Baptist*, p. 246.

that might be lurking among those stones; therefore they could expect no more merciful fate than the fire that burns out the noxious nest, unless their characters were completely changed.

Then this repentance must be no merely formal performance of fasting in sackcloth and ashes, but a real "change of disposition" (*μετάνοια*), which would be evidenced by amendment of conduct. "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke iii. 8), cried the preacher. When asked what these fruits were to be, he showed that he was not thinking of artificial penance. The rich must assist the poor; the tax-gatherer must be honest and not oppressive —a great sign of repentance in the East; the soldier must not treat the people among whom he is billeted with violence or injustice, neither must he mutiny against orders, etc. (vers. 10–14).

All this was preparatory for the coming of the Messiah, whose approach John announced and whose mission he described. It has been pointed out that the special line of ancient prophecy followed by John did not refer to the coming of the Son of David as the Messiah. It was a parallel stream of predictions describing "the day of the Lord" and the advent of God to judgment. Hence it might seem that John would have looked for the kingdom of heaven without a personal Messiah, in a great theophany of judgment If he began his ministry with any such expectation it is plain that before he ended it he accepted and taught the doctrine of a personal Messiah. Perhaps we may lay it to his credit, as a part of his contribution to the advance of thought, that he was able to

combine the two currents of Hebrew prophecy, and to show that the day of the Lord was the day of Christ.

Lastly, John predicted the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Thus, while proclaiming that the Messiah would bring judgment, he added one most important and significant trait to the expected advent. The Messiah would accomplish a higher and more effective baptism than that of John, and it was on account of this baptism that John proclaimed the incomparable superiority of the Coming One. He was conscious of the imperfection of his own baptism, which was joined to repentance, but not to regeneration. It did not really purge out the old leaven; it could not confer a new life. The Christ would do both. John associates fire with the new baptism, saying "He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" (Luke iii. 16). These two elements of the baptism seem to be suggestive of the two aspects of the rite. In regard to the past, the fire goes further than the water, completely purging out the old evil from the community. "The chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire" (ver. 17). In regard to the future, the Holy Spirit signifies more than initiation into a new order. It is the quickening breath of a new life. This is John's sole word concerning the blessedness of the Messianic era. It is deeply significant that he totally ignored the vulgar anticipations of a golden age of material enjoyments, and simply pointed to this one magnificent hope—the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

According to the fourth Evangelist, John came to regard Jesus as the Messiah after he had baptised Him (John i. 33). This is not inconsistent with the

fact that subsequently in the melancholy of his weary imprisonment, when he had exchanged the free air of the wilderness for the stifling atmosphere of the castle dungeon, the prophet was perplexed at the delay of Jesus to declare Himself and take up the expected work of the Christ (Matt. xi. 2, 3). A more remarkable statement of the fourth Evangelist is that John pointed out Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." These words plainly suggest, not only that Christ removes sin, but that He does this by being Himself a sacrifice for sin. The evident fact that St. John's own reflections are mingled with his reports of the Baptist's words in another place (John i. 15–18) has suggested a doubt whether it is so here. In regard to the life of Christ we shall see that the fourth Gospel is the Gospel of apostolic reflections. Still, the words are deliberately ascribed to the Baptist.

NOTE.—This reference to the fourth Gospel raises the question how we are to use that work as a record of the teaching of Christ as well as one of the teaching of St. John. The consideration of so difficult a subject cannot be brought within the limits of a note, and the larger question of the authenticity of the Gospel which lies behind it and is the most important question for determining it belongs rather to the field of "New Testament Introduction." All that can be done here is to indicate the grounds on which we may proceed. Now the style of language which St. John employs is so nearly the same when he is writing in his own person as it is when he is writing in the persons of John the Baptist and of Christ that we sometimes fail to detect any transition (*e.g.*, John iii. 10–21); this is also the style of the three Epistles of St. John; but it is not the style of the language of Christ in the Synoptics. These facts strongly suggest that St. John has cast the thoughts of

Christ into his own words, after fusing them in the crucible of his own mind. On the other hand, no one ever absorbed the spirit of our Lord so truly as did the beloved disciple. If it is the spirit that quickens while the letter is but dead, we have the most valuable teaching of Christ in the fourth Gospel, for here we have its very spirit. It is to be noted also that where St. John is not merely reflecting on some utterance of Christ, but plainly speaking for himself, a difference may be observed between some of his thoughts and those of his reports of our Lord's discourses. Thus the "Logos" doctrine of the prologue never appears in our Lord's utterances as these are recorded in the Gospel, while the picturesque imagery of Christ's sayings—the manna, the water, the shepherd, the door—does not occur in passages which St. John sets down as his own composition. Further, the most striking words attributed to our Lord in this Gospel are inextricably interwoven with those graphic narratives which there is a growing tendency, even among critics who reject the Johannine authorship of the book, to regard as historical. Lastly, the more lengthy discourses are not fluent orations, like the speeches in Thucydides, such as it was customary for an ancient historian to compose in order to express what he believed to be the true thoughts of the characters he was delineating; but they consist of a number of aphorisms strung together like pearls. Broken up they do not look so unlike the short, pithy sayings which the Synoptics record. There is one broad argument which, since it was expounded by Schleiermacher, has satisfied many who otherwise would have been troubled by grave difficulties in this matter—viz., that the Gospel which gives us the greatest teaching in the world must be genuine in its claim to give us the ideas of the world's greatest Teacher. Considerations such as these point to the conviction that we may use the fourth Gospel with confidence as a source for the teaching of our Lord. At the same time the peculiar character of St. John's Gospel and the evident fact that the writer has to some extent allowed himself a free hand in interpreting the ideas of his Master, render it desirable for us to treat the reminiscences in this work apart from those of the Synoptics.

THE TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST

I. THE KINGDOM OF GOD

OUR Lord began His public work by repeating the proclamation which had been the burden of the preaching of John the Baptist: "The kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye" (Mark i. 15). Although it is apparent that His great independent mission soon led Him far beyond the simple message of His predecessor, it is equally clear that this message struck the keynote of all His subsequent teaching. The idea of the Divine kingdom was the central topic of His conversations and parables, and the realisation of it was the supreme end of His labours. Therefore an exposition of the teaching of Christ must begin here if it is to treat the subject from some approach to the standpoint of the Teacher Himself.

The Greek word *βασιλεία* is used in two senses: (1) concretely, to signify a "kingdom," the territory and people and general body politic over which a king rules; and (2) abstractly, meaning "kingship,"

or the rule of a king. In the New Testament the first signification is predominant, but the word sometimes passes over into the second (*e.g.*, Luke xxii. 29; xxiii. 42). Thus we read both of entering into the kingdom of God and of receiving the kingdom of God—the one phrase suggesting the realm, and the other the rule. But, inasmuch as both these expressions occur in the same sentence (Mark x. 15), the two senses of the word *βασιλεία* must be regarded as blended together, and this is a natural result of the new spiritual conception which our Lord has given to us of the nature of the kingdom.*

Essentially the idea of a kingdom of God is that of a theocracy—a state in which God rules. This conception was familiar to the Jews in earlier ages, and was then cherished as the ideal of national government by the choicer spirits; so that to the prophets the human monarch was but a vice-roy, while Jehovah was the true King of Israel. An attempt was made

* St. Matthew alone uses the expression "kingdom of heaven." In the other Evangelists, and everywhere else in the New Testament, the alternative phrase "kingdom of God" is employed. Subtle attempts have been made to distinguish between the two expressions, but the simple fact that they occur in parallel passages should remove all doubt as to their meaning precisely the same thing (*e.g.*, compare Matt. xiii. 11 with Mark iv. 11). The two expressions were used by the rabbis as equivalent. Verbally, indeed, the phrase "kingdom of heaven" means the kingdom which comes from heaven (suggested by Dan. vii. 13, 14), and which is therefore of a heavenly nature; for it is not a New Testament usage to employ the word "Heaven" as a synonym for "God." But the same kingdom is thought of, whichever name is used for it.

to realise the idea in the government of the Asmonæan princes who were also priests. But this earthly theocracy, in the form of a priest-government, did not satisfy the highest hopes; or if there was a temporary satisfaction in the glorious days of the Maccabees, in course of time that gave place to the disappointment of the subjection of the people under a heathen yoke. Still, the belief in a future perfect state wherein God would set up His kingdom was preserved. Therefore neither John the Baptist nor Jesus Christ had to make the first announcement that there was to be such a thing as a kingdom of God. They did not speak of *a* kingdom, they preached about *the* kingdom; and when they said "the kingdom of God is at hand" there is every indication that their language was intelligible to the people. Now, since we cannot think that they were playing with words and deceiving their hearers, we must perceive that they accepted the general idea of the kingdom as that was understood by the Jews. This is not so difficult to believe in the case of John the Baptist, who probably followed the prevalent notion of a visible monarchy, although he attributed to it a higher moral character than the people generally conceived; but it is remarkable in the case of Jesus Christ, because our Lord drew a startlingly unexpected picture of the Divine kingdom. We may find the explanation, however, in the fact that the essential idea of the kingdom as this was held by the Jews was adopted and confirmed by Christ. This great, God-inspired hope of Israel was ratified by our Lord. The people were taught to believe that God

would come and set up His kingdom in the midst of them; Jesus declared that He was commencing to do so. We must not let the materialistic degradation of the notion among the Jews blind our eyes to the essential validity of the idea in itself.

The Jews expected the great hope of the kingdom of God to be realised in the establishment of an earthly monarchy, with the victorious deliverance of Israel from the dominion of Rome, and the triumphant re-establishment of the throne of David at Jerusalem, under a human but God-appointed and preternaturally endowed Messiah, reigning in far brighter splendour than that of the palmiest days of old, bringing the heathen into subjection, and in particular sealing the doom of the enemies of Israel. It has been asserted that Jesus Christ at first adopted this view, and expected to be the Messiah of popular earthly grandeur, and that He only developed a more spiritual conception of the kingdom of God when He saw the impossibility of succeeding in a rebellion against the iron might of the Roman Empire. There is no evidence in support of this assertion. Although doubtless our Lord was cradled in the prevalent notions of His age, by the secret development of His own thought He must have grown out of them before He commenced His public ministry, for in no single word did He encourage those notions. All that can be said in favour of the assertion is that Jesus preached about "*the* kingdom of God," and that thus His words would call to mind the Jewish picture of this kingdom. But we have seen that He adopted the essential idea of the kingdom. He

never abandoned that idea in His most spiritual teaching. On the other hand, no single word is recorded of Him implying that He ever taught that the form of the kingdom would be that of the Jewish imagination. His earliest known teachings are devoted to the enlargement, enrichment, and spiritual elevation of the idea.

But Jesus not only rescued the conception of the kingdom of God from its degradation in later Jewish thought to a purely political embodiment, and so restored the high moral and religious character of the great hope as this was foreshadowed by the prophets —He not only thus returned from the gross materialism of His contemporaries to the lofty teaching of Isaiah and Jeremiah—He went much further, and raised the idea of the kingdom into an exalted position it had never before attained. In His treatment of this subject He was strikingly and inspiringly original. Let us note some of the characteristics of the new development.

The chief of these is the spiritual nature of the kingdom. In the teaching of our Lord the kingdom of God is not an external, earthly dominion. It is the rule of God in the hearts of His people. It is going too far to say that Jesus held this rule to be solely individualistic. The very idea of a kingdom implies a society, and our Lord expended much of His teaching on the social relations of His disciples. Still, even in these social relations He represented them as governed from within—not by law and force of magistrates, but by affections and principles and interior motives. This is the most

important feature of our Lord's teaching concerning the kingdom. It occasioned much perplexity and disappointment among His disciples even to the last (*e.g.*, Luke xxiv. 21; Acts i. 6); and it led to His utter rejection by the Jews. Yet He persisted in it when He stood almost alone, without wavering for a moment. Such a conception of the kingdom involves certain important consequences. Its privileges must depend on moral and spiritual conditions. Only they can be citizens of the kingdom who are in the right spiritual state to receive it (Mark x. 15). Its limits cannot be territorial. It may have adherents anywhere; even in the most favoured localities many may be excluded from it (Matt. viii. 11, 12). It will not strike the eyes of the world by an appearance in any external form, will not come "with observation" (Luke xvii. 20). Its blessings will be chiefly internal—not power, wealth, luxury, but rest (Matt. xi. 28), and the vision of God (v. 8); although it will also confer temporal advantages, and its meek citizens will inherit the earth (ver. 5).

A very fresh and significant thought put forth by our Lord is that of the gradual growth of the kingdom. He commenced by proclaiming that it was at hand. Subsequently He spoke of it as already present, saying on one occasion, "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you" (Luke xi. 20); and again, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was to come, replying in the words, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say,

Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is among you" (Luke xvii. 20, 21).* On the other hand, He spoke of the advent of the kingdom as future, as in His model prayer, saying, "Thy kingdom come" (xi. 2). The explanation of this apparent self-contradiction is not far to seek. The kingdom did not come fully at once with a great apocalypse of glory, as the Jews expected. It came not only invisibly and secretly, but in a small beginning, like a grain of mustard seed, or a little leaven; and its development was gradual. A beautiful parable, only recorded by the second Evangelist, illustrates this fact by means of the analogy of spring growth (Mark iv. 26–9). Even while the kingdom was in their midst people could only enter it one by one, and therefore its privileges were still only possibilities of the future among those who lingered outside its borders —an obvious truth for all time. Moreover, the full realisation of the kingdom was a promise of the future, awaiting, as a preliminary condition, the judgments on the Jews predicted in Matt. xxiv., and as a final condition the complete evangelisation of the world.

The next step is to the idea of the world-wide destiny of the kingdom. This is closely related to one

* This interpretation, rather than the rendering "the kingdom of God is within you," seems preferable for two reasons: (1) Our Lord's words are a reply to the question, *When* is the kingdom to come? The more natural answer is to say it is *already* present, rather than to state *where* it is. (2) These words were addressed to Pharisees. The kingdom was not within them; but it was among them. The Greek word ἐντός admits of either meaning.

of the consequences of the first-mentioned principle, that of the spiritual nature of the kingdom—viz., its independence of geographical boundaries. But Jesus went further. Not only did He teach that the gates of the kingdom were open to all mankind; He also declared that the kingdom was destined to spread over the entire world. The leaven was to leaven the whole meal (Luke xiii. 21). Nothing is more remarkable than the daring with which One who appeared as an artisan in an obscure provincial town claimed to have founded a kingdom which was to conquer the world, with the utmost confidence that never faltered at any disappointment—except the striking way in which the history of Christendom has been verifying His words through all the centuries. No doubt the Jews looked for a wide, if not a universal dominion; but this was to have Jerusalem for its centre, and to be a purely Jewish empire. With Christ the kingdom is cosmopolitan.

Lastly, our Lord unveiled the supreme blessedness of the kingdom of God. The specific boons promised by Christ will fall to be considered by themselves below. Here it may be remarked, however, that the kingdom itself is shown to be the *summum bonum*. While people persisted in treating it as a means to earthly, materialistic ends, Jesus would have it received as an end in itself—as treasure hid in a field, as a pearl of great price, to obtain which a merchant sells all he has (Matt. xiii. 44–6). Therefore our Lord bids His disciples trust all other matters to God, in order to be free to devote their supreme care to obtaining the kingdom, and says, "Seek ye first His

kingdom" (Matt. vi. 33). This is the more remarkable because it is in striking contrast to John the Baptist's sombre picture of the coming kingdom.

There is a certain development in our Lord's teaching concerning the kingdom of heaven; but this does not follow the course which might have been anticipated. Jesus began by expounding the brightest pictures of the new age, and in doing so His cheerful gospel shone out like sunshine over against John the Baptist's vision of judgment. But this gospel was rejected by the great majority of those to whom it was preached. Then our Lord changed His tone, and in His later teaching described the coming of the Son of Man in judgment to visit the sinful people with chastisement (Matt. xxiv. 29–31). Thus He returned, in a measure, to the message of John the Baptist, who had spoken of the winnowing fan and the axe. The utterance of these darker truths may have been occasioned by the painful disappointment of the earlier hopes of our Lord's ministry, but the truths themselves belong to the essential conception of the kingdom of God. It is a righteous rule; therefore it must bring judgment, and this must lead to wrath against sin and bitter chastisement. Yet all these things are now to be considered in the light of the gospel of peace which comes between John the Baptist and the final scenes of Christ's ministry.

In the fourth Gospel the kingdom of God is only twice referred to by name. The first passage is in the conversation with Nicodemus, where Jesus says, "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the

kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). These words show the spiritual character of the kingdom and the necessity of a right condition for participating in its privileges. What is fresh to us is the doctrine of the new birth, which we must consider later on. The second is that in which Jesus says to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence" (xviii. 36). Here, before the representative of Rome, Jesus distinctly repudiates the conventional Jewish notion of the kingdom. The specific point of His words directs attention to its origin. It does not come from this world. Its source is in heaven, in God. Therefore its methods of government must be spiritual, not temporal. There is nothing in this at all out of harmony with what we have seen in the Synoptics. But the general drift of the fourth Gospel runs into ideas of light, life, etc., and thus the form of thought does not often lead it to cross the lines of the utterances in the Synoptics on the subject of the kingdom of God. The two passages referred to are enough, however, to indicate that it accepts our Lord's views of the kingdom in general as these appear in the earlier Gospels.

II. THE PERSON OF CHRIST

The peculiarity of our Lord's teaching about Himself as this is recorded in the Synoptics is that it is presented in casual hints and enigmatical

phrases, rather than in the clear assertion of definite claims. His shrinking from the blaze of fame, which is often apparent (*e.g.*, Mark i. 44; iii. 12; v. 43; vii. 36), may be ascribed to modesty. But the strange way in which He refers to Himself cannot be entirely accounted for by this graceful attribute of a sensitive nature, because at times He makes the most astounding assertions concerning His own rights and prerogatives. A further explanation may be found in the necessity of educating His disciples in new views of old hopes. This will be apparent if we go a little more into detail.

The Head of the expected kingdom of God was known among the Jews in Hebrew as "the Messiah," and in Greek as "the Christ," *i.e.*, "the Anointed," with an evident reference to the solemn anointing of a king chosen by God, and of the endowment of the Divine Spirit which that anointing represented (1 Sam. xvi. 13). Thus the title implied that the predicted King would be both chosen by God and filled with the Spirit of God. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon our Lord in His baptism is represented in the Gospels to be this Divine designation of Jesus as the Christ together with the expected gift of the Spirit. Evidently our Lord understood the event in this sense, and henceforth He shaped all His course on the ground that He was the Christ. He never repudiated the title when it was offered to him; sometimes He unmistakably claimed it (Mark x. 47–9; xv. 2).

On the other hand, He was slow to publish it. He did not first take it for Himself; it was addressed to

Him by admiring followers before He had sanctioned the use of it. Then, although He never denied it, He repeatedly checked the enthusiastic proclamation of it by thoughtless disciples, sometimes with an imperativeness indicative of vexation, which showed that He was actuated by more decided motives than the distaste for notoriety natural to a person of fine feelings (*e.g.*, Mark i. 43).* We must remember that His conception of the Messiahship was necessarily conditioned by His conception of the kingdom of God. He confirmed the general expectations of both; but as He modified, and even revolutionised, the nature of the kingdom, it was necessary for Him to do just the same with the characteristics of the King. To have proclaimed Himself Messiah before He had carefully instructed His disciples in the spiritual nature of His kingdom would have been to have aroused delusive expectations, and very likely to have excited a rebellion against Rome, in which His real work would have been lost, and a flood of disasters, anticipating the horrors of the later wars of the Jews, would have swept over the disappointed nation. Hence it was necessary for Him to discourage the popular ascription of the Messiahship at first, just as it was necessary for Him to renounce it in His own thoughts once for all on the occasion of His great temptations in the wilderness, where its garish promises tried in vain to fascinate Him, until one by one he trampled them under foot and emerged determined in heart to realise

* Observe the strong word ἐμβριμησάμενος—"sternly admonishing," as though with anger.

an incomparably more lofty ideal, although He knew this would provoke misapprehension and involve Him in a life of thankless toil. First the disciples must know His truth, His aim, His character; afterwards, and on the ground of this knowledge, it would be possible for them to receive His Kingship without serious misunderstandings. For this reason it was best that it should be perceived by men in their meditation on the character and work of Christ, rather than baldly claimed and plumply asserted. Besides, it was quite in accordance with His whole method of teaching, which was to awaken thought, not to impart ready-made information, that our Lord should wait for His disciples to form their own opinions of Him. Even then the acknowledgment by those who were in a measure trained to understand His position was not a justification for immediately publishing His title. The knowledge must be confined at first to the inner circle of those who could appreciate it. The famous scene at Cæsarea Philippi marks that stage in the gradual teaching of the Apostles at which they have come to be fully assured that Jesus is the Christ. Yet, even after receiving St. Peter's clear confession, Jesus "charged the disciples that they should tell no man that He was the Christ" (Matt. xvi. 20). In the very last week of His earthly life He suddenly adopted a totally different course; by riding in rustic triumph up to Jerusalem, amid the unchecked applause of the crowd, He openly accepted the Messiahship, though in a startlingly lowly manner. But then He knew that He was riding to His death.

By this time His true disciples could understand Him in some measure, and it was now too late for harm to come of the delusions of the ignorant. Thus it was as one who claimed to be King of the Jews that Jesus was tried before Pontius Pilate (Mark xv. 2), and crucified (ver. 26).

The title which our Lord most frequently employed when referring to Himself was "the Son of Man" —a title never used by any of His contemporaries in addressing Him. What did He mean by it? Several explanations have been offered. It has been suggested that the term indicated His human nature, in contrast with His Divine nature. But this is not a New Testament thought. Nobody doubted that He was a man. There were no Docetics in His day. Some have regarded the expression as a periphrasis for the first person singular. But this is not like our Lord's natural style; He often used the simple pronoun "I." Moreover, the interpretation would require "this Man," or "this Son of Man." Again, it is said that the words point to the peculiar nature of our Lord's humanity as something new, and not in the ordinary line of mankind. Would Jesus call Himself *Son* of Man with such an end in view? There is no indication that He contemplated any such lesson. An explanation resembling that last mentioned is that the title marked Christ as the ideal and perfect man. The definite article rather favours this notion. He is "*the* Son of Man." But the ancient usage of the phrase is foreign to such an explanation; in the Old Testament the expression is generally associated with notions of weakness and lowliness.

Then we have the suggestion that the title was intended to show that nothing human was strange to Christ, in contrast with popular notions of splendour connected with the Messiah. Jesus was the brother of all men. This is nearer to the teaching and character of our Lord, but it is not distinctly indicated in the phrase.

One thing is clear. The very variety of the interpretations which have been suggested for the title shows that its meaning could not be obvious. Our Lord seems to have used it purposely as an enigma to arouse questions, to stimulate reflections, just as He used His parables as blinds for the unthinking, but transparent pictures for the reflective (Mark iv. 11, 12). We may look for the key in two directions: in the Old Testament usage of the term, and in an induction of the instances in which Jesus employs it Himself.

In the Old Testament we meet with it as a Hebraistic synonym for "man" generally. But the Hebrew usage of similar forms of speech leads us to think that it must also be employed with a distinct reference to the characteristics of man, as we have the phrases "sons of thunder" (Mark iii. 17) for passionate men, "sons of the evil one" (Matt. xiii. 38) for wicked men, etc. Accordingly we find the word used in the Old Testament with a special leaning to the idea of the weakness of man. This is apparent in Ezekiel, the writer who employs it most frequently (*e.g.*, Ezek. ii. 1, 3, etc.). But there is one instance of the use of the term in a very different and most striking connection—viz., in Daniel's prophetic vision

of the world-kingdoms. After the four beasts there comes one like "a Son of Man" with the clouds of heaven, and to Him there is given a kingdom and an everlasting dominion (Dan. vii. 13, 14). That the prophecies of Daniel were familiar to our Lord and were applied by Him to Himself and His kingdom is unquestionable (Mark xiii. 14, 26). It is therefore very generally thought that He took the title "Son of Man" with a direct reference to Daniel's Messianic vision. It is in some measure a confirmation of this view that the title was used for the Messiah in the Book of Enoch. Whether the Messianic portions of that book were written before the time of Christ or not, they could not have been familiar to our Lord's hearers, who certainly did not take the title "Son of Man" to be equivalent to that of "Messiah" (*e.g.*, Matt. xvi. 13, 14). But our Lord seems to have employed an obscure and unusual title for the Messiah, which was at the same time too general to be evidently Messianic, to suggest a new line of thought in the minds of His disciples. In contrast with the four beasts, the Son of Man appeared as greater in the scale of being, more gentle and humane, and outwardly more weak, though really more powerful. These ideas were important in the correction of coarse, false Messianic hopes.

An induction of the instances in which our Lord uses the title leads to the same conclusion. One or both of two characteristics are found in all of them. They are all passages in which Jesus describes His mission, His functions, or His future work and

destiny;* and they generally do this with some reference to His present lowly estate, His poverty and apparent weakness. These two ideas, then, are to be found in the utterances about the Son of Man: the specifically Messianic work of our Lord, and His earthly humiliation—*e.g.*, the Son of Man "has authority" (Mark ii. 10), is "Lord of the Sabbath" (ver. 28), is the Sower (Matt. xiii. 37), will come in glory (Mark viii. 38), etc.; and on the other hand, the Son of Man "has not where to lay His head" (Luke ix. 58), "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mark x. 45), will be set at naught (viii. 31), etc.

Thus to thoughtful hearers our Lord's use of the title helps in the correction of false expectancy and in the understanding of His true character and mission.

Jesus did not use the title "the Son of God" interchangeably with the name "the Son of Man"; but, like the appellation "Messiah" or "Christ," it was more frequently given to Him by others. On the lips of the high-priest it seems to be just an honourable name for the Messiah, pointing to Divine recognition and favour and close relations with God to be enjoyed by the expected King, but not to the real Sonship in nature and being which Christians understand by the phrase (Matt. xxvi. 63). Many clear references to Divine Sonship in the Old Testament would naturally lead to the use of the title for the Messiah by Jews of later times (*e.g.*, Psalm ii. 7; lxxxix. 26). We

* Harnack has pointed out that the title "Son of Man," being derived from Daniel's vision, more especially suggests the heavenly origin of the Messiah.

cannot be sure that St. Peter had got beyond the Jewish thought in his great confession (Matt. xvi. 16). Like the more familiar name of the future King, this was also accepted by our Lord without question or objection. But it is evident that interpreting it by His own inner consciousness of closest relation to His Father He saw more in it. We may say that while there were Jews who vaguely regarded a certain Divine Sonship as an attribute of the Messiah and dependent on the Messianic calling, Jesus reversed the process, and knew Himself to be the Messiah because He was first of all inwardly conscious of Divine Sonship. This consciousness emerges in the one recorded utterance of His childhood (Luke ii. 49). He frequently speaks of God distinctively and emphatically as "My Father" (*e.g.*, Matt. vii. 21; x. 32; xv. 13, etc.); and although He also often names God to His disciples as "your Father," He never uses the expression "Our Father" in such a way as to include Himself with His disciples in a common relationship. Surely this shows that His use of the pronoun of the first person singular points to a unique Sonship. Once in the Synoptics He speaks of Himself as simply "the Son," after the manner of the fourth Gospel, with a strange, solemn exaltation of tone, and indicating a peculiar intimacy of knowledge between Himself and His Father which no other being enjoys (Matt. xi. 27; Luke x. 22).

It was early noticed by His delighted hearers that Jesus "taught them as having authority, and not as their scribes" (Mark i. 22). Not only was there weight and power in His utterances—which was

perhaps what the Evangelists meant by authority—but there was also a calm assumption of the right to teach, even sometimes in opposition to the venerated precepts of the law—*e.g.*, "Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil" (Matt. v. 38, 39); and so in other cases, where Jesus did not hesitate to set aside the authority of Moses as obsolete. Then, while the disciples appealed to "the Name" of Christ in working miracles, Jesus Himself wrought them on His own authority. Thus St. Peter said to the lame man at the Temple, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk" (Acts iii. 6); but Jesus said to the paralytic at Capernaum, "I say unto thee, arise," etc. (Mark ii. 11). Next it is to be observed that He claimed the right to forgive sins, and justified His claim on the ground that He was the Son of Man, when His critics accused him of blasphemy in putting it forth (ver. 10). He offered a gracious invitation on condition of a personal relation with Himself, such as we more often meet with in the fourth Gospel, when He called the labouring and heavy laden to Himself, and promised them rest if they would take His yoke upon them, and this immediately after speaking of His close and unparalleled intimacy with His Father (Matt. xi. 27–30). In His parable of the Sheep and the Goats He describes Himself as the Son of Man coming with attendant angels, and sitting on the throne of His glory, while all the nations are gathered before Him for judgment; that is to say, He is to come as the Judge of all mankind, Gentile as well as Jewish, heathen as well as Christian (xxv. 31, 32).

Not only do the angels appear in His Messianic train, but in another case they are placed between Him and men in the scale of being—so high is His natural existence. He says, "Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark xiii. 32). Here, after referring to "no one," Jesus next speaks of the angels, and only then names Himself, immediately before "the Father." He seems to claim nothing less than ubiquity when He says, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20), and after His resurrection He promises His continual presence in the Church (xxviii. 20).

On the other hand, He sets certain bounds to these prerogatives. He speaks of limitations to His knowledge (Mark xiii. 32) and His authority (x. 40); He repudiates the idea of absolute goodness, as that idea might be ascribed to God—*i.e.*, the idea of self-originating, underived goodness (x. 18); He claims to work His miracles by "the Spirit of God" (Matt. xii. 28) or "the finger of God" (Luke xi. 20); He says, "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father" (Matt. xi. 27)—owning to a boundless heritage, but ascribing this to the gift of His Father; He confesses a divergence between His will and that of His Father (Mark xiv. 36); He prays in a spirit of dependence. Plainly these are real limitations; but it is to be remembered that they are all confined to the lifetime of our Lord on earth.

It is with respect to its representation of the person of Christ Himself that the Gospel of St. John

appears to differ most widely from the Synoptics. In the three first narratives our Lord seems to a large extent to retire behind His message, but in the later-written work He speaks very much more about Himself. Then the early reticence concerning His Messiahship, and the guarded and gradual revelation of His claims, which marked the Synoptic accounts, here appear to give place to a more public confession from the beginning; so that we miss the slow development of teaching on the subject. Lastly, we have lengthy discourses instead of picturesque parables and scattered sayings embedded in incidents.

Two or three considerations may help us to account for these startling differences, in some degree at least. In the first place, it is to be noted that the scenes of the discourses in St. John are as a rule unlike those of the Synoptic sayings. For the most part, St. John gives us conversations with individuals (*e.g.*, with Nicodemus, with the Samaritan woman), or with the inner circle of disciples, in both of which cases our Lord might speak more personally than in preaching to the crowd; at other times we have reports of arguments with unfriendly critics, who would naturally force the discussion to the question of His own claims. But there are also instances of a similar style of teaching carried on in public (*e.g.*, John vi.). Now we must recollect that none of the Evangelists attempt anything approaching a complete biography of Jesus Christ. They all give but a few selected scenes in their brief pamphlets. St. John tells us what his object was—viz., to lead to faith in Christ (xx. 31). With such an end in view, it was natural

that he should select those reminiscences which were most directly concerned with the person of his Master. Therefore, it is only just and reasonable to suppose that he did not aim at giving average specimens of the words of Christ on the whole round of subjects treated by the great Teacher—especially as other topics were represented by the earlier Gospels, with which he was acquainted. His confessed aim would directly lead him to gather up the Christological discourses and arguments. Still, all this will not wholly account for the difference of style and the great increase of emphasis on the personal claims of Christ, which stand forth as the most marked and original features of the fourth Gospel. Is it not evident that if St. John moulded the ideas which he had gained from Christ in the forms of his own meditation, he would be likely to do this most freely in his treatment of thoughts concerning the person of his Lord, because here his affections would be most warmly stirred? But this only means that if Christ taught by His life and character and action as well as by His words, the total impression of His representation of Himself in all these varied ways is that which would be felt by His most intimate and sympathetic disciple. That is what St. John gives us. It is really the most perfect self-revelation of the heart of Christ.

When we turn from the question of form to that of substance, the difference between St. John and the Synoptics is less striking. In the fourth Gospel, as in the other narratives, our Lord admits Himself to be the Jewish Messiah, uses the title "Son of Man,"

and also owns His Divine Sonship. Here, too, He speaks of distinct limitations on His earthly powers and privileges. He repudiates the charge of His enemies that He makes Himself equal with God (John v. 18, 19); He takes a subordinate position by saying He was sent by God (ver. 38); He only teaches that which He heard from God (viii. 40); He can do nothing of Himself, but only does what He sees the Father doing (v. 19). Such sayings point to quite as much subordination during the earthly life of our Lord as is indicated by any in the Synoptics.

On the other hand, the accentuation of the Divine nature and exalted functions of our Lord is here most distinct. The following points may be noted in particular:—

1. The idea of Divine Sonship which is admitted into the Synoptics is much more prominent in the fourth Gospel. Jesus here very frequently refers to Himself as simply "the Son" in His relation to God, whom He names "the Father." The expression "only begotten Son" occurs four times in the Gospel; but in each case it is in the descriptive language of the Evangelist, not in the speeches of Christ. Following our Lord's own teaching, we learn that as the Son Jesus is in the closest fellowship with His Father, He is one with the Father (x. 30). To see Him is to see the Father (xiv. 9). This is quite in harmony with Matt. xi. 27; but the wealth of references to the close intimacy existing between the Son and the Father accentuates the conception of the Divinity of our Lord in a degree that is peculiar to the Gospel of St. John.

2. In the fourth Gospel Jesus speaks much more frequently of His own person as the source of salvation. It is not now to the gospel, or to the kingdom, but to Christ Himself that we are to look for the highest blessing. He gives the water of life (iv. 14; vii. 37), He is the Bread of life (vi. 48–58), the Light of the world (viii. 12), the one Way to the Father (xiv. 6), the Door of the sheepfold (x. 9), the Good Shepherd (ver. 11), the Vine in living union with which His disciples flourish as fruitful branches, separated from which they wither and perish (xv. 1–7). These and similar ideas with which the Gospel teems give it its highest value in the self-revelation of Christ as the very centre and source of the whole life and energy of His people. They are not contradictory to anything in the Synoptics; they are even anticipated by the invitation to the heavy-laden to come to Christ for rest, and by the representation of His body and blood in the Last Supper as given to Christians like bread and wine for the food of their very life. But they are immensely more frequent and prominent, and they are worked out much more in detail, in St. John's version of our Lord's teaching.

3. St. John appears to contribute a distinct addition to the teaching of Christ concerning Himself in the Synoptics, in recording utterances that point to our Lord's pre-existence. The passages in which Jesus speaks of Himself as coming from the Father, and from heaven, may not distinctly teach this truth, because somewhat similar passages may be found in connection with the origin of godly men (*e.g.*, compare viii. 23 with xv. 19 and xvii. 14). And yet the

frequent allusions to His Divine origin and the weight attached to it clearly point to something in the experience of Christ which is far above what good men enjoy in deriving their spiritual life from God. Moreover, some passages are less ambiguous. Thus in John xvii. 5 Jesus speaks of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. Wendt thinks that this only means that the glory itself existed from eternity in readiness for the future Messiah.* But Jesus said He "*had it*" (τῇ δόξῃ ᾗ εἶχον) —an expression which certainly implies His personal existence. Then, in a discussion with the Jews, Jesus makes the astounding assertion, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii. 57). Wendt thinks that His existence before Abraham was only "in the Spirit of God, in the thoughts, determinations, and promises of God"; † and Beyschlag maintains that Jesus was speaking only of the pre-existence of "The Idea," and he justifies his view by a reference to the Platonic doctrine of the real existence of ideas.‡ But if Christ spoke these words at all, is it to be supposed that His hearers, Jews of Palestine with most concrete modes of thought, would have understood Him in any such sense? And the words are so startling and incisive that they seem to bear the stamp of a genuine recollection by the Apostle.

* *Der Inhalt der Lehre Jesu*, p. 470.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, vol. i., p. 247.

III. THE REVELATION OF GOD

Jesus claimed to be possessed of a unique knowledge of God, which He alone could communicate to the world (Luke x. 22). This claim was altogether in accordance with His primary mission of establishing the kingdom of heaven on earth, because in doing so He had to bring men into closer relations with God, its Head. Yet, as we have seen, it was not at all His method to convey new knowledge in the form of definite propositions, and certainly any such thing would have been quite out of place with a revelation of the spiritual world. Jesus aimed at revealing the centre of God, not His circumference, which indeed does not exist with an infinite being, and therefore cannot possibly be described. It is the heart of God that Christ makes known, and therefore we must not ask Him for a formal addition to the list of Divine attributes as these are detailed by systematic theologians. Such knowledge as Christ gives is perceived by those who are in sympathy with Him. It is like a man's knowledge of his mother. It cannot be set forth in words. All we can define is its effects.

Dealing with these external facts, we see that our Lord accepted the Old Testament teaching about God for the basis of His own representations—the Hebrew monotheism as not only opposed to polytheism and idolatry, but as opposed to the dualism which admits either matter or a spirit of

evil to be in some respects co-ordinate with God, and also—what is perhaps even more significant in the Old Testament—the lofty moral character of God, His supreme righteousness, His abhorrence of sin. Even what is most original in our Lord's teaching about God is not absolutely new when regarded in a hard, verbal way. It has its roots in older teaching; it is the development of ideas of earlier revelation. But to call it a development is to say something of moment. Jesus altered the proportion of truths, exalting and expanding what had been previously neglected, bringing to the foreground what had been left in the dim distance and often hidden by less essential though more readily grasped ideas.

It is as true as it is obvious that our Lord's revelation of God centres in His wonderful teaching about the Divine Fatherhood. Now in some degree the Fatherhood of God is a truth widely perceived by men. It is recognised by Homer, who describes Zeus as the "father of gods and men." In the Old Testament it frequently recurs, though usually with two limitations: first, it is connected with Israel, not with the whole human race (*e.g.*, Hos. xi. 1); second, for the most part it is applied to the nation as a corporate unit, not to individuals (*e.g.*, Jer. xxxi. 20), or if to any individual, to the divinely anointed king (2 Sam. vii. 14). Later, the fatherly relation of God to all individual Israelites is seen, and this idea registers a great advance (*e.g.*, Mal. ii. 10). Thus the Wisdom of Solomon (ii. 18) calls the just man "the son of God." Nevertheless, in the Old Testament and in Jewish thought generally the supreme kingship,

the awful majesty of God predominates, and the Fatherhood is but subsidiary and only occasionally perceived at all. Jesus reverses the order, and sets the Fatherhood of God in the first place, as that which is most essential, determining everything else. Thus, according to our Lord's revelation, the very authority and government of God are fatherly, and the exercise of the Divine functions of ruling and judging are determined by the Divine Fatherhood. This does not mean any weakening of those functions; to suppose that it could do so is to entertain the most unworthy notion of fatherhood. No justice can be so exact, no righteousness so exalted, no chastisement so searching, as the justice and righteousness and chastisement exercised by a perfect father in the administration of his family. But then, behind all is the father's heart, which leads him to do everything, not merely for the sake of administering law magisterially, much less only to exercise his own sovereignty—although he is sovereign, and although he does maintain law—but with this end in view, that he may throughout promote the highest good of his children.

In particular two or three features of our Lord's portraiture of the Fatherhood of God should be considered.

Clearly it suggests the most intimate relationship. Nothing is more painfully evident in later Judaism than the ever-widening gulf between God and the world, which originated in a well-meant attempt to exalt the Creator above the creation in abhorrence of heathen pantheism, but which resulted in

a cold, dreary theism. The intermediate space was peopled with angels, who discharged the functions of Providence, because God was too exalted to come into immediate contact with man. On man's part formal acts of worship, regarded as meritorious on their own account, were substituted for the living communion of the soul with God, now made impossible by the vast separation between man and his Maker. All this Christ abolished, bringing men and women into closest contact with God, as members of God's family, as God's own children, and encouraging the utmost freedom of access to God in prayer and trust. This was one of the most revolutionary elements in the teaching of Christ. It gave His disciples a new heaven and a new earth—a heaven brought near from beyond the skies, an earth no longer God-deserted, but filled with God's presence.

If we ask what attribute of the Divine Fatherhood Christ made most prominent, the answer must be that this was His love for His children. It is just to recollect that Jesus was speaking to Jews who already recognised the rectoral relationship of God to man. Had He been addressing light-hearted Greeks who did not sufficiently reverence authority in religion, no doubt He would have dwelt more on this characteristic. He presupposes the Old Testament.* Still, with Christ evidently the Father's care for His children is the leading thought about God; this lies behind

* Therefore the Christian missionary to the heathen must take the Old Testament in his hand, as well as the New; the law and the prophets, as well as Christ; and this even to give a fair representation of the teaching of Christ.

and determines all else. The very hairs of our head are all numbered by God. If He clothes the open fields with beauty, and feeds the repulsive ravens, and watches over the cheap sparrows, much more will He provide for His children (Luke xii. 6, 24, 27). He is the one "Good" (Mark x. 18), and His goodness is seen chiefly in His kindness. If we, being evil, know how to give good things to our children, much more will God, who is not evil, not an imperfect father, give good things to them that ask Him (Matt. vii. 11). Accordingly, to be perfect like God is to love our enemies (v. 43–8), which must mean that the crown of God's perfection is His love to His enemies.

Another trait of Christ's portrait of Divine Fatherhood is its universality. Most of our Lord's words concerning the Fatherhood of God are addressed to His own disciples, and therefore to those who are already brought into happy relations of reconciliation with God. Moreover, He speaks of a certain condition of conduct being necessary—"that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v. 45). Similarly He owns those who do the will of God as His own brothers and sisters, etc. (Mark iii. 35), which of course implies that He could not regard other people in the same light. On the other hand, all that He says of the nature and character of God suggests a breadth of Fatherhood which cannot be confined to a section of mankind. The whole idea of the gospel springs from that conception of God's love to lost and fallen men which is just an outcome of His fatherly heart. Our

Lord's description of God's indiscriminate kindness in providence is in accordance with the universality of His Fatherhood—"for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (Matt. v. 45). The parable of the Prodigal Son presents the same idea most pointedly, especially when we consider that the immediate occasion of that parable was the harsh narrowness of the Pharisees who objected to Christ's freedom of brotherly intercourse with persons of ill-repute (Luke xv. 1, 2). These two positions may be easily reconciled. God is the Father of all mankind, loving all, kind to all, and calling all to Himself in the gospel. But His disobedient children do not enjoy the fatherly relationship excepting in their share of the general providence of God, and in the fact that it is open to them to have higher privileges. The prodigal son must come to himself before the fact that he has a father can mean anything to him. In his abandoned state he is worse off than the hirelings at home, and therefore practically no longer a son—lost, dead. His return is his coming back to the experiences of sonship.

In our Lord's revelation of God in the fourth Gospel, the most striking thing is a fact apparent also in the Synoptics, but less prominently than here—viz., that the revelation is in the person and character of Christ Himself. Not only does Jesus say, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9), but He makes us perceive the truth of His words. Our highest conception of God is just the character of Christ. Hence, quite apart from any

words about God, by simply living among us and manifesting His own thoughts and springs of action, Jesus gives us the highest revelation of Divinity, because He gives us the most perfect exhibition of supreme goodness. If God is the One Good, as we have learnt in the Synoptics, Christ must be the most complete revelation of God, because in Christ we perceive the most exalted type of goodness ever witnessed on earth.

Coming to details, it is to be noticed that Jesus only once in the fourth Gospel speaks of God as "your Father" (xx. 17). But He often uses the expression "the Father." No doubt this agrees with the more prominent position of His own Sonship expressed by the corresponding phrase "the Son." Still, the phrase also points to the idea of Fatherhood itself as essential to God, and it does so in that more abstract style which is characteristic of St. John's Gospel.

Another thought is that of the essential spirituality of God to which our Lord directs the attention of the woman at the well by declaring emphatically, "God is Spirit" (iv. 24). Therefore He can only be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

In marked contrast to the rabbinical notion of the withdrawal of God into the heavens while the world is administered by angels, we have the idea of the immanence of God, and His present activity in the universe, suggested by the words, "My Father worketh even until now, and I work" (v. 17).

It has been asserted that the fourth Gospel embodies a system of dualism which can be traced throughout in the conflict between light and

darkness; and this is said to be most apparent in the distinction between the children of Abraham and the children of the devil, brought forward by our Lord in chap. viii. But to press the latter antithesis so as to make it represent a radical opposition of being and origin is to distort the text. The contrast of parentage is not between God and Satan, but between Abraham and Satan—here the dualism breaks down at once. Besides, we have not two races set in conflict. Though Abraham was regarded as the head of a specially privileged nation, nobody pretended that all who were not Jews had sprung from Satan.

Plainly our Lord's whole argument deals with moral characteristics. They are children of the devil who are under his influence, assimilated to his likeness, members of his household. John the Baptist's expression "Generation of vipers" is somewhat analogous. That the universal Fatherhood of God cannot be here excluded should be apparent when we consider the unlimited offers of grace which are so characteristic of this gospel—unless we are to believe with Luther that all such appeals in Scripture are uttered ironically!

IV. THE GOSPEL

The subject of the preaching of our Lord was designated in the earliest records "The Gospel (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) of God" (Mark i. 14), and "The Gospel of the Kingdom" (Matt. iv. 23). On His visit to the synagogue at Nazareth Jesus read an ancient prophecy which contains the words "The Spirit of

the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to declare good tidings (εὐαγγελίσασθαι) to the poor" (Luke iv. 18), and applied it to His own message; and in giving His commission to the Apostles He told them that "The Gospel" must be preached to all nations (Mark xiii. 10). It is in accordance with this description of the Christian message that the Sermon on the Mount opens with Beatitudes. The people of Galilee were quick to discover that Jesus was bringing good tidings to them, for they flocked to Him and "heard Him gladly." The joyousness of His disciples was positively offensive to Pharisees, who thought that it was not becoming for religious people to be very happy (Mark ii. 18). No doubt a revelation of truth, whatever it is, must bring some satisfaction to perplexed souls in search of light; but evidently the description of a message as "good tidings" and the reception of it with great and general delight point to something in the contents of the message which is in itself most pleasing. Now this is not apparent in John the Baptist's preaching, which threatens judgment and destruction in the dreadful day of the Lord after the manner of his favourite prophet Malachi; and even the ethical teaching of Jesus, while it entrances us with its purity and elevation, is so searching and exacting—requiring a righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the most correct people, such as scribes and Pharisees—that taken by itself it would seem to impose a heavier burden than that of the law, and therefore could scarcely be regarded as a gospel. It is necessary to see that there is another side to the teaching of Christ,

which explains the ease of His yoke and the lightness of His burden. When this is perceived it becomes apparent that the good tidings are not in conflict with the severe ethics, but that they even include the moral ideal, although they put this on an entirely new foundation. How, then, may the contents of the preaching of Christ and His Apostles be emphatically denominated "good news"?

In the first place, it must be repeated,* Christ regarded the announcement of the approaching advent of the kingdom of God as itself good news. This was obviously so with the Jewish expectation of material prosperity. But Jesus would have it seen that there was even more cause for gladness in the coming of the kingdom in the spiritual might and glory which He ascribed to it. So He spoke of the kingdom itself as a treasury, as a marriage feast. This must mean that it is a good thing for the world that the rule of God is to be established in willing hearts. While people imagined political oppression, poverty, and pain to be the great evils from which the new age would liberate them, Jesus considered that the root evil was rebellion against the will of God. This is why the full coming of God's kingdom in the perfect doing of God's will on earth as it is done in heaven was in His teaching the *summum bonum*. With this we must associate His revelation of God as the Father. Our view of the desirability of the privilege of citizenship in a kingdom the law of which is nothing less than the absolute will of the sovereign must depend on our idea of the character of the king. A kingdom of

* See p. 24.

Moloch would be an *inferno*. The kingdom of God is to be a paradise, just because God is a perfectly good Father. Thus, by His revelation of God, Jesus made it apparent that the proclamation of the advent of the kingdom of God was the declaration of good tidings. Moreover, when His disciples began to perceive the nature of His Messiahship, side by side with the wonderful attractiveness of His own pure, perfectly unselfish, and most kind life and character, they came to know the kingdom as it was embodied in Christ Himself, and thus it was revealed to them in the most winsome form. Seeing the kingdom in Christ we perceive that it is most attractive.

But our Lord definitely promised certain distinctive boons. While with the proclamation of the kingdom He showed that on man's side repentance was necessary, on His own side He offered forgiveness. Though this offer is not stated in the meagre reports of the commencement of our Lord's ministry, it must have been present from the beginning, because it is one of the essential characteristics of that teaching which is most fully recorded. Thus, to the paralytic at Capernaum—who, according to the earliest account, seems to have had himself conveyed to Jesus in distress about his sins rather than in search of bodily health—our Lord pronounced immediate and full forgiveness; and then, seeing that this daring utterance excited the first symptoms of opposition on the part of the scribes, Jesus, as the Son of Man, distinctly claimed authority on earth to forgive sins (Mark ii. 5, 10). It is in the Gospel according to St. Luke, however, that the teaching of Christ in regard

to this subject is most fully expounded, and from that Gospel we may gather three great truths concerning forgiveness.

The first is the universal need of forgiveness, shown especially in the case of the Pharisee and the Sinner (Luke xviii. 10–14).

The second is the unlimited possibilities of forgiveness. Jesus does not minimise sin or excuse it; on the contrary, He shows it to be an unspeakably more horrible evil than men ever suspected. But He proclaims a forgiveness that is ample enough for all sin. Of the woman who is known as "a sinner," Jesus affirms that her sins are "many," but also that they are all "forgiven her" (Luke vii. 47). The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is the only exception to the universal forgiveness, and evidently this cannot be so because the limit of grace is at last reached, but because to call good evil is to pervert the conscience so completely that repentance, which is the first condition of forgiveness, is necessarily rendered impossible to a person who deliberately does this.

The third truth is the personal nature of forgiveness, which is not merely the withholding of punishment or the cancelling of a debt, but in the heart of it a reconciliation with One whom we have grieved and wronged by our misconduct. This is made apparent in the parable of the Prodigal Son, whose pardon is seen in the welcome accorded to him by his father. That is to say, forgiveness goes straight to sin, rather than to its pains and penalties. The sin is buried in oblivion, and the penitent restored to the old status of communion with God.

It is to be observed, further, that Jesus not only connects penitence with pardon, but also assigns a man's forgiveness of his brother as an essential condition of God's forgiveness (Matt. vi. 14, 15). An irreconcilable temper towards a fellow-man excludes reconciliation with God.*

In His discourse at Nazareth, when quoting from the prophecy concerning the good tidings, Jesus claims to fulfil the words that promise "release to the captives" and "liberty to them that are bruised" (Luke iv. 18). This is just what the oppressed Jews looked for in their Messianic deliverance from the Roman tyranny. Our Lord promises the boon in another form. Liberation from spiritual evil is most clearly set forth in the fourth Gospel, but the idea of it pervades the whole teaching of the Synoptics. It is powerfully suggested by all the miracles of healing. The word salvation (σωτηρία), which means, primarily, making sound or healthy, transfers to the spiritual realm the healing ministry which miracles illustrate in the physical. Jesus appeared as the Friend of sinners, not simply because He was sociable with them, but because He was their Physician; and His sociability, which gave natural offence to Pharisees who had not discovered its motive, was one essential condition of His practical work in restoring the most abandoned characters to spiritual health.

Jesus grievously disappointed the hopes of worldly-

* That this is not an arbitrary condition is clear if we follow St. John when he says, "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot love God whom he hath not seen" (1 John iv. 20).

minded Jews because He did not offer wealth and ease, but, on the contrary, hardships and persecutions, contumely and the cross (Mark viii. 34). Nevertheless, He promised His disciples temporal blessings. He encouraged them to pray for daily bread (Matt. vi. 11); He bade them not be anxious about food and raiment, because their heavenly Father knew their needs; and He told them that if they first sought the kingdom of God all other things would be added (ver. 33). It may seem that these separate lines of teaching do not agree. Two considerations, however, should remove the difficulty. First, Christ did not consider that many earthly things were necessary or even beneficial. Wealth He regarded as a danger and a snare, and the rich man as an object of pity rather than of envy. Very few earthly things are really needed. It is daily bread for which we are to pray—not stores for the future, and not luxuries. Yet much of the anxiety and disappointment of life is simply concerned with unnecessary desires for these things. Second, Christ moved in a society in which, it would seem, men could generally obtain a fair livelihood, although the many references to poverty and distress in the New Testament testify to the social troubles that always accompany such political disturbances as were not infrequent in Galilee in the first century. He was not contemplating the absolute breakdown of civilisation which we witness in modern cities, where ghastly misery is hidden behind the pomp of wealth and splendour. But, then, if His teachings were honestly applied to social questions to-day, this disgrace to Christendom would disappear. When the

kingdom of heaven is fully established life on earth must be cheerful and contented.

One element in the deliverance brought by Christ was intended to help His fellow-countrymen in regard to a peculiar trouble of their religious life. This was liberation from the yoke of rabbinical casuistry, a galling yoke which He indignantly condemned when He saw heartless pretenders making use of the influence gained by official position or saintly reputation to bind on their meek pupils burdens which they themselves would not so much as touch with their fingers (Luke xi. 46). To a people labouring and heavy laden with such gratuitous obligations He offered the restfulness that accompanied His yoke. This was easy not because its requirements were small —they were greater than those of the scribes and Pharisees—but because they did not consist in irritating external performances. In their very breadth and elevation they were capable of exercising an exhilarating influence over the people who submitted to them, and they could be readily observed in the inspiring presence of their Author. The permanent element in our Lord's teaching which corresponds to this liberation of the Jews from rabbinism is the universal offer of spiritual liberty, so that the disciple of Christ is always free to use his own judgment in the application of the large principles he has received from his Master to the details of daily conduct.

Above all these specific boons there is one supremely glorious blessing promised by Christ to His followers, the greatest of all conceivable personal possessions— the gift of eternal life ; and with this is connected the

promise of rewards to the faithful. But these things belong to eschatology, which must be considered in a subsequent section.

The main ideas of the teaching of our Lord on these subjects in the Synoptics are confirmed by St. John. The forgiveness of sins, deliverance from evil—spiritual and temporal, and eternal life, are all offered in the fourth Gospel. But fresh light is thrown on some of these points, and others less apparent in the Synoptics are made clear.

Freedom from the slavery of sin, vividly suggested in the Synoptics by the whole mission and work of Christ, is clearly expounded in John. It is the one kind of liberty that Christ is represented as bringing. The captives are the slaves of sin, for he who gives way to sin makes sin his master. The liberation is breaking Satan's yoke and delivering men from the power of sin (John viii. 31–4).

In the Synoptics eternal life usually appears as a future boon; in the fourth Gospel it is a present possession (*e.g.*, v. 24), although even here it occasionally takes its old place among the hopes of the future (iv. 14, 36; vi. 27; xi. 25). We may compare this difference of treatment with the distinctive ways of regarding the kingdom of God, even in the Synoptics, as both present and future.* The life begins now on earth, but it survives death, and it reaches out into eternity. This may be illustrated by the words of Jesus addressed to Martha of Bethany, in which He says that whoever trusts in Him will never die (xi. 26). But if it is a present possession, the life is more than

* Pages 22, 23.

the gift of immortality. The promise of eternal life cannot mean simply that they who receive it will not be annihilated in the future. This promise must refer to something in itself different from the animal life. According to His custom our Lord refrains from defining the phrase.* He leaves us to discover His meaning in the course of His teaching, and in doing so we are led to see that He is directing our minds to the thought of the life of the soul in contact with God in which the higher nature is quickened into activity—*i.e.*, a real present spiritual life.

Finally, we have the promises of the Paraclete. John the Baptist predicted that the coming Christ would baptise with the Spirit; and, according to St. Luke, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit was given by God in answer to prayer (Luke xi. 13), and was indeed the source of His own power (xii. 12). In His last discourse He declares that after a little while He will come again (John xvi. 16), having previously promised that He would send another Comforter, the Spirit of truth (xiv. 16). The one phrase is sometimes taken to refer to our Lord's resurrection, and the other to the Pentecostal gift, while some of Christ's expressions seem to be more appropriate to the Second Advent (*e.g.*, xiv. 3). But it is not in harmony with the tone of this discourse for sharp distinctions to be drawn, and we must remember that as yet no definition of the Trinity had been attempted. It is more congenial to the circumstances not to

* John xvii. 3 is not a definition, but a description of the means through which eternal life is received.

separate the mission of the Spirit from the spiritual presence of Christ among His people.

Jesus seems to be contemplating this abiding presence of Himself as really the principal consequence of His return (*e.g.*, xiv. 19). He looks beyond the resurrection, and His brief, transient, earthly manifestations of Himself to a few disciples, to the much greater consequences of His dwelling perpetually in the Church. This seems to blend with the coming of the Spirit. Beyschlag points out that here, however, a limited sphere is assigned to the Spirit.* (1) The Spirit's influence is on earth; Christ is also the Mediator in heaven. (2) The Spirit does not give new truth, but only calls to mind the teaching of Christ (xvi. 13, 14). (3) The operation of the Spirit is here limited to truth-teaching, while Christ is the source of life, as is shown in the image of the vine. On the other hand, it is important to observe that our Lord does not expressly lay down any limits for the sphere and operation of the Spirit. He simply names certain functions which were appropriate to His immediate aim in preparing the disciples for His departure.

V. REDEMPTION

The fact that Jesus Christ came proclaiming a gospel is itself an indication that He did not expect men to work out their own redemption by service, or sacrifice, or any other meritorious action; it shows

* *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, vol. i., pp. 274–7.

that He regarded the salvation of the world as a Divine act—one springing from God's love, manifesting His free favour, and realising itself in His almighty energy. A prophet's appeal to the conscience is a wholesome message, but we can scarcely call it a gospel. The good news goes further, as we have seen, and tells of gifts and blessings which God is prepared to bestow. Thus we are brought to consider the Divine source and process of redemption.

Nothing is more characteristic of the teaching of our Lord than His revelation that salvation directly flows out of the illimitable goodness of God. This is most strikingly apparent when it is considered in its contrast to the course recommended by the Jewish teachers of His day, who directed anxious souls to almsgiving, fasting, ablutions, formal prayers, Sabbath observance, and other irksome mechanical performances. In sharp opposition to all these recommendations Jesus shows that God has concerned Himself to recover His lost children. His pure fatherly love, His deep compassion, His effective energy—these are the foundations of the kingdom of God. Our Lord says that the immediate purpose of His own mission is to seek and to save them that are lost, like a shepherd rescuing wandering sheep (Matt. xviii. 11–13). His work is compared to the action of the woman who will light a lamp and sweep her house in search of a single coin (Luke xv. 8–10). He is the Physician whose sole business is with the sick (Mark ii. 17). Here we see not only the generous forgiveness that welcomes a penitent, but also active exertion in searching him out and restoring him. In

this, the central work of His life-mission, Jesus Christ reveals a power which counteracts the tendency that the study of nature in our own day has shown to be at work in all regions of life. While the doctrine of evolution by the survival of the fittest may be a delightful creed for the successful, it is a sentence of doom on the unfortunate. Now our Lord comes to reverse failure. Of Him we read the prophecy, "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench" (Matt. xii. 20).

Turning to consider our Lord's revelation of the means by which He carried out His saving work, if we were to judge by the time and trouble He devoted to preaching and teaching, as well as by the large place His public and private instruction occupies in the Gospels, we should conclude that this was His chief work. He first appears as a Preacher proclaiming the gospel (*κηρύσσων*), and then as a Teacher explaining truth to His disciples (*διδάσκων*). He was known among His contemporaries by the name "Teacher" (*διδάσκαλος*, *e.g.*, Mark x. 17)—*i.e.*, as a Rabbi. The freshness of His ideas arrested attention, and compelled His hearers to exclaim with amazement, "What is this? A new teaching" (i. 27). We cannot suppose that Christ's teaching had no connection with the great work of redemption. Assuredly it was an instrument for seeking and saving the lost, by directing men to right views of themselves and God, by leading them to a perception of the requirements of righteousness and the guilt of sin, to a consciousness of the forgiving mercy of God and the claims and privileges of His kingdom. Thus Christ was sowing the seed of life

by means of teaching, as the parable of the Sower showed (Mark iv. 20). Next to preaching and teaching Jesus was most actively employed in healing the sick. The Gospels bring out the intimate connection between His words and His works, showing over and over again how a miracle was the occasion of some discussion with our Lord's critics or some pregnant utterance of His own.* It does not appear that the leading motive of Jesus in healing the sick was to furnish materials for Christian evidences. When asked for a supernatural portent He refused to supply it (Matt. xii. 38, 39). He never made any display of His miracles; on the contrary, He endeavoured to suppress the fame of them (*e.g.*, Mark i. 43). So far was He from exhibiting a miracle to induce faith, that He required faith as the condition of performing one (ix. 23, 24). The Evangelists assign an entirely different motive for His action in saying that He healed the sick because "He was moved with compassion" (*e.g.*, Matt. ix. 36). This simple, touching statement, taken in connection with the corresponding character of the miracles, casts a flood of light on the main purpose of our Lord's ministry. In His verbal teaching He mingled severity and gentleness with an almost Rembrandtesque sharpness of antithesis of

* This is very apparent in St. Luke, who is most careful to connect the sayings of Christ with the incidents out of which they arise, while St. Matthew more often groups them in connected discourses, and St. Mark reports fewer of them. Hence we may infer that, on the whole, the third Gospel gives us a more primitive version of Christ's sayings than the first—the earliest account of all being St. Mark's.

light and shade. But this contrast was wholly missing from His works. For the sick and suffering He had nothing but compassion. Without exception His miracles are deeds of pure kindness. Now it is clear that such works, though not primarily intended to serve a didactic purpose, were in fact parables vividly illustrative of the healing of souls. At the same time our Lord made them serve in His direct assault on the kingdom of darkness (Luke x. 18). They show that His redeeming work is intended to ameliorate the temporal, physical condition of men as well as their spiritual nature. Therefore it is legitimate to infer from them that as God gave miracles to the first century, so He has given science to the nineteenth century, *i.e.*, to be an instrument for the redemption of man, and therefore that sanitation and medical missions should be regarded as integral parts of Christian service.

In the next place it is to be observed that, though we read less of our Lord's personal claims in the Synoptics than in the fourth Gospel, what is recorded there is most emphatic; the whole picture of the life of Christ reveals the unique spell of His personality, and makes it evident to us that His life and character are at the root of His redeeming work. He evidently refers to Himself as the robber of Satan who binds the strong man and spoils his house (Mark iii. 27). It is in His name that the demons are subject to His disciples; and on hearing of the success of the seventy Jesus exclaims, "I beheld Satan falling as lightning from heaven," and then He adds that He has given them authority "over all the power of the

enemy" (Luke x. 17–20). On the same occasion He invites the labouring and heavy-laden to *come to Him* for rest (Matt. xi. 28).

It is apparent to every reader of the New Testament that the purpose of the death of Christ does not take the pre-eminence in His own teaching which it assumes in that of St. Paul. In regard to this subject more perhaps than in regard to any other we may see a development of doctrine in the New Testament. But quite apart from the fact that Christian ideas are thus introduced by degrees, it is obvious that subsequent reflections on the Cross in the clear light of all its tragic circumstances are likely to be richer than anticipatory references to it in those early days when it only loomed on the horizon as a gradually emerging destiny of the future. Still, our Lord uttered some definite predictions about His approaching doom; these were scarcely grasped by His disciples, but to us they cannot but be of profound interest. It is evident that there was a progressive distinctness in His teaching on this topic, corresponding, perhaps, to the progress of His own human consciousness respecting it. At first all was sunshine and hope; but after opposition was roused, and as this grew ominously more and more determined and virulent, it became clear to Him that there could be but one end if He would be true to the course He had chosen with a full conviction that it was in accordance with the will of God; this end our Lord perceived and described with growing distinctness. The deepening shadow of the Cross was thus upon His path throughout His later ministry.

In speaking of His passion and death Jesus added fresh details each time He referred to the subject. But from His first announcement of it He always connected it with His supreme destiny. It was never regarded by Him as an accident, nor did He even treat it as a sheer calamity, like the murder of John the Baptist, or as simply the termination of His career. This is apparent from the first allusion to it, which occurred on the occasion of St. Peter's great confession at Cæsarea Philippi, just after the crisis when the majority of the disciples had taken offence and forsaken Jesus, and when His enemies had determined to suppress His work. The confession of His Messiahship afforded an occasion for enlightening the faithful few on a terrible secret of the future, the possibility of which they had not yet imagined, because they could now bear the strain on their faith. They learnt to their horror that the Christ, whom they expected to redeem Israel, "must suffer many things" and "be killed" by the chief authorities of the nation. This was necessary. It was part of the destined mission of Christ. Why it was necessary, how it came to be an integral part of the Messianic mission, Jesus did not yet say. But it was much simply to announce that it must be.

Once, however, and quite incidentally, as it seems, when rebuking a spirit of self-seeking in His disciples, our Lord describes His death as a ransom, saying, "Verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark x. 45).

Here He clearly announces a purpose in the surrender of His life. He *gives* His life. He could avoid the Cross, but will not do so. Thus there is a voluntary element in His death. It is not suicide, for He does not take His own life; but He will not escape death at the cost of the renunciation of His mission. This purpose is to secure some good to others, to "many"—a word which does not point to a limitation, as though it were carefully distinguished from "all." The context shows that the contrast is with *self* as a unit. Further, the idea of "ransom" signifies liberation on payment. The payment is Christ's life. What is the liberation? It is going too far to ask, To whom is the payment made? for we always have to be careful not to press the details of a metaphor beyond the point of comparison. Still, some bondage is clearly suggested. Elsewhere Christ refers to death as a power from which men seek to be freed (Mark viii. 36, 37); in St. John He distinctly describes the slavery of man to sin (John viii. 34); and in the Synoptics He frequently speaks of the world being under the power of Satan (*e.g.*, Mark iii. 15; Luke xiii. 16). Therefore presumably the deliverance will be from some such evil—death, or sin, or Satan. Seeing that our Lord leaves the phrase open, it is best for us to take it in its large comprehensiveness to mean deliverance from all evil —remembering that with Christ the root of evil, the one real evil, is sin. Then we read that this ransom is "*instead of*" (ἀντί) many, *i.e.*, instead of the "many" paying it, which they cannot do; or perhaps preferably "in exchange for many," so that they

may be liberated in return for the expenditure of Christ's life. In all this our Lord does not say why it is necessary for Him to die in order that men may be set free. He simply states the fact.

The most emphatic teaching on the connection between our redemption and the death of Christ may be drawn from the Lord's Supper. In instituting the ordinance Jesus said, according to St. Luke, "This is My body, which is given for you" (Luke xxii. 19), or, according to St. Paul, "This is My body, which is for you" (1 Cor. xi. 24).* In both cases the preposition ὑπὲρ is used—plainly teaching that Christ was giving His body, *i.e.*, giving Himself up to death, on behalf of His disciples, for their benefit. The words concerning the cup are more explicit. According to the two first Evangelists we read, "This is My blood of the covenant" (Matt. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24). According to St. Luke and St. Paul, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood" (Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 25). The reference to the *new* covenant points to the prophecy of Jeremiah about a covenant which should be both more merciful in its provision for pardon and more inward and spiritual in its principles than the Levitical law (Jer. xxxi. 31–4). Just such a covenant was found in the gospel of Christ, with its large offer of forgiveness on God's side and its character of inwardness in relation to human experience; and this identity was recognised in the early Church

* Matthew follows Mark in giving only the words "This is My body," without the clause added in Luke and 1 Corinthians (Matt. xxvi. 23; Mark xiv. 22).

(Heb. viii. 10–13). The association of blood with the new covenant is evidently founded on a reference to the sacrifice which, according to the Pentateuch, ratified the ancient covenant, when the altar and the people were sprinkled with blood (Exod. xxiv. 3–8). Thus in all four accounts of the Lord's Supper Jesus Christ attributes a sacrificial character to His death. The narrative in Exodus shows that on the whole the analogy is that of the burnt-offering, the symbol of the self-dedication of the worshipper. The sprinkling of the blood of this offering was the ceremonial dedication of the Jews to the old covenant; the taking of the cup in the sacrament is the similar dedication of Christians to the new covenant. The death of Christ ratifies His covenant, and the participation in the cup suggests the personal share of the communicant in the covenant thus ratified. A further clause of deep significance is added by St. Matthew—viz., "unto remission of sins" (Matt. xxvi. 28).* This plainly states that the death of Christ is designed to lead to forgiveness. It has been objected that the clause must be an addition by the Evangelist, or perhaps a result of reflection in the Church, because, it is said, elsewhere Christ never connects His death with the forgiveness of sin, but always represents

* Εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν—the same phrase that St. Mark uses to characterise John's baptism of repentance (Mark i. 4); not that there is any ground for treating these as two rival methods. On man's side it is repentance that leads to forgiveness; on Christ's side it is His death that really effects forgiveness.

the pardon of man to be a free act of God's fatherly love, as, for example, in the case of the prodigal son. On the other hand, it was expressly declared that Jeremiah's new covenant was to be a covenant of forgiveness (Jer. xxxi. 34). Therefore, to ratify that covenant is directly to lead to the remission of sins. Moreover, Christ often claimed to bring forgiveness; and we have seen that when He spoke of giving His life as a ransom the leading thought suggested would be that of deliverance from sin. Accordingly, even if the words were added by the Evangelist or his predecessors, they would be entirely in harmony with the other teaching of Christ. Under these circumstances, and considering how very rare are our Lord's references to His death, is it necessary to resort to any ingenious expedient to account for the fact that one of those instances somewhat anticipates the line of later apostolic teaching?

One more lesson of the Lord's Supper in relation to redemption may be noted here. The eating and drinking by the communicants suggest a personal participation in Christ by each individual Christian as the means of sustaining his very life. Here we approach ideas more fully expanded in the fourth Gospel.

Lastly, it cannot be without some weighty bearings on His redeeming work that our Lord predicted His resurrection (Mark ix. 9, 10, 31; x. 34), for the prediction shows His prevision of victory, and a comparison of this prediction with His promises of an abiding presence may lead us to see that He regarded His resurrection as a step towards His spiritual indwelling in the Church.

Still, keeping to the teaching of Christ alone, we see that on this, as on other subjects, the fourth Evangelist agrees with the main positions of the Synoptics, although his language and method of treatment vary from the style of the earlier writers, especially in strongly emphasising the significance of the person of our Lord.

The importance of the word of Christ in regard to salvation is often insisted on in St. John's Gospel. The first step towards eternal life is to hear this word (v. 24); it is the truth revealed by Christ that is to make men free (viii. 32); the disciples acknowledge that He has the words of eternal life (vi. 68).

While the Synoptics plainly imply that Jesus Christ Himself is the centre of salvation—for in these records He appears historically as the living Saviour—that great truth is more directly stated and more fully described in the fourth Gospel. Chap. vi. in particular sets it forth with startling force. Jesus there declares Himself to be the Bread of life, and announces that if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever (ver. 51). Elsewhere, in the same Gospel, He teaches that He is the Light of the world, and that the way to avoid walking in darkness is to follow Him (viii. 12). When He is lifted up from the earth He will draw all men to Himself (xii. 32). The person of Christ is the object of faith (ver. 46), and to reject Him is to come under the condemnation of God (ver. 48). He concludes His last discourse by encouraging His disciples to be of good cheer, because He, their Lord and Saviour, has overcome the world (xvi. 33).

The fourth Gospel gives marked prominence to our Lord's death. In the first place it shows that Jesus foresaw the event, and also the necessity for it. Thus, in the conversation occasioned by the information that certain Greeks wished to see Him, He exclaimed, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified. . . . Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone; but if it die, it beareth much fruit" (xii. 23, 24). This appeal to the analogy of nature, and the words immediately following, "He that loveth his life loseth it," etc., show that our Lord regarded His death as something in accordance with a general principle that belongs to the constitution of nature, and that should be followed by men—viz., that death is necessary to life, that fruitful service depends on self-sacrifice. Then Christ said that He had authority to lay down His life and to take it again (x. 18). Therefore His death was not unavoidable; it resulted from a voluntary course of action on His part. He gave Himself in death. Further, the object of this surrender of Himself in death was the good of men. He was the Good Shepherd laying down His life *for** *the sheep* (x. 11). In His last discourse He said that it was expedient for the disciples that He should go away, for if He did not go away the Comforter would not come (xvi. 7). Thus He directly connected His death with the descent of the Holy Spirit, which is

* ὑπέρ, "on behalf of," "for the sake of." St. John never uses the word ἀντί, "instead of," which we have met with in one saying recorded by Mark and Matthew (Mark x. 45; Matt. xx. 28), in relation to the death of Christ.

elsewhere referred to as the greatest of blessings. This is a thought peculiar to the fourth Gospel. Lastly, the death of Christ was to result in glory to God and to His Son. After shrinking from the dark prospect He braced Himself up to face it with the thought that it would glorify God's name (xii. 27, 28). He often referred to it as His own glorification (*e.g.*, xii. 23; xvii. 1).

VI. CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE KINGDOM

Although the open proclamation of the gospel by Jesus Christ showed that its privileges were free to all men, other of our Lord's declarations made it clear that many people would miss the enjoyment of them. This fact and its causes are illustrated in the parable of the Sower, which describes how the best seed will fail if it falls on uncongenial soil, and a mournful confirmation is furnished in the rejection of Jesus by the greater part of His hearers.

Inasmuch as our Lord came to rule over a spiritual dominion which has its seat in the will, the first condition must be voluntary acquiescence on the part of His subjects. Such a kingdom as this must be "received" or "entered" by a personal act. Moreover, many people may covet its privileges and yet never taste them (Luke xiii. 24), because a bare desire to enter the kingdom is not enough. Certain conditions must be fulfilled. These may all be summed up in the idea of whole-hearted self-surrender.

The first step in this self-surrender is the renunciation of sin. Jesus commenced His ministry with the Baptist's appeal to repentance (Mark i. 15). Although this is not named so often in our Lord's later ministry as we might expect, it is plainly implied throughout. The woman known as "a sinner," who follows our Lord to the Pharisee's house, confesses her heartfelt penitence by washing the feet of Jesus with her tears (Luke vii. 37, 38); Zacchæus, who receives salvation into his house in receiving Christ, restores fourfold to those whom he has wronged by extortion (xix. 8); the publican at the temple is accepted because he confesses his sins, while the Pharisee, who only confesses his virtues, though he acknowledges that God is the source of them, is rejected (xviii. 10–14). Although the religious people of the day were sceptical of the possibility of the amelioration of corrupt characters, Christ, who came to effect a complete regeneration of the very worst among them, was both quick to discover the first leaning towards a better life, and stern to refuse all encouragement where this was not to be found, even in decorous people who were not conscious of the need of improvement. His keen sense of the evil of sin led Him to extend the requirements of repentance in two directions. The first was in showing the universality of the need of repentance. Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners—*i.e.*, those who owned to sin (Mark ii. 17). People who were ironically allowed the name of righteous were excluded from His call just because they did not admit their sinfulness. The second extension

of the requirement of repentance was in regard to its internal character. Christ demanded a real change of mind and intention (μετάνοια), while the external religion of His day was satisfied with the penance of fasts and almsgiving. In this demand He followed John the Baptist, but the searching character of His teaching made it much more significant.

It has been remarked that faith does not take the prominent position in the teaching of Christ which it holds in the Pauline Epistles; but the difference is more apparent than real, and it may be accounted for in a large measure by the more concrete method of our Lord's teaching, because, though He does not describe the relation of the abstract idea "faith" to discipleship with any fulness, His whole demeanour shows how much He expects those who come to Him to manifest a trustful spirit as an essential condition of being received. To the first appeal, "Repent ye," Jesus immediately adds, "and believe in the gospel." He frequently urges His disciples to believe in God. Faith is absolutely necessary for those who would be healed by Him. The cure is according to the faith; and when faith is wanting—as at Nazareth—miracles are impossible (Mark vi. 5). Jesus speaks of little ones who "believe on" Him (ix. 42), and He encourages His disciples to ask in His name (Matt. x. 22). Here faith is not the acceptance of a set and formal creed. The first instance gives "the gospel" as the object of faith. In all other cases the object is a person—God or Christ.

On the other hand, our Lord repeatedly insists on the importance of active obedience. He concludes

His Sermon on the Mount with the parable of the Two Houses: that on the rock represents every one who hears His words, "and doeth them"; that on the sand every one who hears them, "and doeth them not" (Matt. vii. 24–7). He owns as His nearest relatives all who do the will of God (Mark iii. 35). The three great parables of judgment in Matt. xxv. turn on questions of conduct. But the obedience which Christ required must be interpreted in harmony with the principles of His revelation of the kingdom of heaven and of the new covenant. He did not bring an external kingdom and a law of the letter. Ruling in the heart with a law written within, He expected obedience in the form of a full submission of the will. This, then, is just one aspect of the self-surrender—it is self-surrender in action.

To the disciples who asked with foolish ambition, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus replied by setting a little child in the midst of them, and saying, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii. 3), thereby teaching that childlikeness is an essential condition of membership. Just as the child had no idea of seeking a place of honour and could put forth no claim for such a position, the true disciple must approach the kingdom with no appeal to the history of his previous achievements, but as beginning life afresh with a child's sense of helplessness and dependence. To attain this childlike state even good men such as our Lord's disciples must be completely turned round (ἐὰν μὴ στραφῆτε, etc.).

Next, we must note that our Lord used strong and startling words on the subject of absolute renunciation. Speaking not to a few enthusiasts eager to pursue a course of superior sanctity, but addressing "the multitude" as well as "His disciples," Jesus exclaimed, "If any man wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me" (Mark viii. 34). When we consider the mixed character of the audience in connection with the universal application of the phrase "if *any man* wishes" (εἴ τις θέλει), it is evident that our Lord is laying down an essential condition of discipleship, not a counsel of perfection. Then if we do not read His words as they are emasculated in Christian usage, but in their original strength, we see that they mean complete self-surrender. The self-denial is not merely suppressing some desire of pleasure, but renouncing *self* (ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτόν)—*i.e.*, it is making self no longer a supreme end. The cross-bearing is not suffering some inconvenience: to put it in modern language, it is following Christ even to the gallows. This is a condition of discipleship because it is involved in the faithful following of Christ. Jesus does not attribute any merit to asceticism; on the contrary, He discourages it (Matt. xi. 19; Mark ii. 18, 19). The self-abnegation and the cross-bearing are not to be aspired after on their own account; they are to be accepted as incidental to the supreme aim of following Christ, and they are necessitated by the fact that He renounced all self-seeking and found His mission along the course that ended in crucifixion. Since the Christian is a follower of Christ he cannot

avoid the Christ-like life of self-abnegation; he, too, must know the cross.

Taken by themselves, these principles must incline us to regard Christianity as a pessimistic religion. But the peculiar glory of our Lord's teaching and example is that He shows that the way of the Cross is the way of life and true satisfaction. A man is to save himself by renouncing himself; he is to find his life by losing it (Mark viii. 35). This is the secret of Jesus.

Along these lines we must seek for the interpretation of some of the hardest sayings of Christ. In Luke xiv. 26 our Lord is reported as saying, "If any man cometh unto Me, and *hateth* not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." This phrase is softened in Matthew, where it reads, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me," etc. (Matt. x. 37). If St. Luke's version represents the original words of our Lord, St. Matthew's has them paraphrased in a correct explanation. Jesus who rebuked the prevalent excuses for disloyalty to the fifth commandment, could not have meant to destroy the most sacred natural affections. But He taught that no earthly tie should interfere with the supreme duty of the Christian life. So He would not allow one new disciple to bid farewell to his friends, although He permitted the very thing in the case of Levi; and He even rejected the request of another for permission to perform what a Jew would regard as a supremely mportant duty—the burying of a father by his son

(Luke ix. 59, 60), because, reading their hearts, He knew that the petitioners were only offering excuses for not making a whole-hearted surrender of themselves. The rich young man who craves the inheritance of eternal life has not done enough in keeping the commandments from his youth. There is one thing he lacks—viz., complete self-surrender. Therefore he must sell all he has, and give the proceeds to the poor, in order to follow Christ (Mark x. 17–22). Concerning this incident it may be remarked that the rule of poverty is laid on a single individual, and in answer to a pressing question of his; it is not a part of Christ's general teaching in discourses to the multitude by the sea-shore, or in His instruction of His disciples on the mount. Many disciples of Christ were permitted to retain their property without a rebuke. Possibly his wealth was a peculiar snare to the young ruler—his "great refusal" seems to indicate as much. Perhaps he was to have been honoured like the Apostles, who were committed to the life-work of a special service of Christ, for which they forsook home and business, although other Christians were not called to the same course. At all events, for him the total renunciation of wealth was necessary. Therefore not to make it was to renounce the hope of eternal life. A key to such teachings of Christ as these incidents contain may be found in His words about the eye, or hand, or foot, that is to be plucked out or cut off. The self-mutilation is to take place if the offending member causes a man to stumble (Mark ix. 43–50). With this condition the words of Christ may be taken quite literally; just as we say

a mortifying limb must be amputated to save the body. The following of Christ is the supreme duty, and it contains the true blessedness of the Christian. Therefore anything that interferes with this must be given up. The primary duty is self-surrender; out of this flows the secondary duty of making a particular sacrifice of whatever turns out to be inconsistent with the self-surrender in individual cases.

Some of the words of our Lord seem to imply that the privileges of the kingdom of God were not open to all classes of people. Thus, to the Syrophœnician woman who sought the cure of her child, He spoke as though His blessings were reserved for Jews (Mark vii. 27). Yet it is not true to the history to maintain with Pfleiderer that the Christianity of Christ was mainly Jewish in its outlook, and that we owe the wider range of cosmopolitan Christianity to the influence of Greek thought in St. Paul and the Hellenists. It is only possible to accept such a view by means of an arbitrary mutilation of the Gospel records. The Gentile woman had what she sought. The rejection of Christ at Nazareth was occasioned by His words about the preference of Gentiles to Jews (Luke iv. 25–9). He had not found such faith in Israel as in that of a Roman centurion (vii. 9). His type of true neighbourliness is in a good Samaritan. Only a preconceived theory can lead to the rejection of these things from the life of Christ. They are wholly in accordance with His acknowledged spirit of love and brotherliness in welcoming publicans and sinners, although it is still apparent that His immediate, personal mission was to Jews. Then

St. Luke's Gospel has been denominated "Ebionite," because of the favour for the poor and the hard words about the rich which it contains. But the two first Gospels have much in common with it in this respect, and record the difficulty of a rich man's entrance into the kingdom of God. Yet not one of the three records is conceived in a spirit of positive animosity to rich men. It is rather that they are commiserated for their difficulties. These are on their side, not Christ's. When the Apostles ask in their amazement, "Who then can be saved?" Jesus replies, "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God" (Mark x. 26, 27)—*i.e.*, even rich men can be saved by the almighty power of God.

Again, our Lord thanks God that the mysteries of the kingdom are hidden from the wise and understanding, and revealed to babes (Luke x. 21). We may compare this with St. Paul's record of his missionary experience that "not many wise after the flesh" are called (1 Cor. i. 26). But that Christ absolutely refused His gospel to people of intelligence is not to be supposed. There were such among His disciples. His language is partly ironical. Some were too wise in their own conceits to learn of Him. Then it was good news for the multitude that His richest truths were put within the reach of the unlearned and simple. Lastly, His requirement that His disciples should turn and become as little children pointed out the way by which "the wise" might participate in the privileges of His gospel.

Jesus deplored that while many were called few were chosen (Matt. xxii. 14). The parable of the

Sower shows why in so many cases the call was ineffectual. This is brought out still more clearly in the parable of the Marriage Feast. The invitation is to the many, the banquet is abundant; but those who were first invited invent excuses for staying away. Both parables make it evident that the fault is on man's side.

But our Lord sometimes spoke as though He had a deliberate intention of hiding His truths from the majority of His hearers (Mark iv. 11, 12). This could not have been with the sole object of keeping them in the dark, because in that case He might have refrained from all public utterances. He evidently desired to sift the multitude, so as to separate the earnest souls from the indifferent. All who would listen sympathetically could learn His deepest truths, for we can scarcely regard the private training of the Apostles as a purely esoteric instruction strictly reserved for the initiated, because Jesus uttered most of His loftiest ideas in public. The secret of His teaching would be missed by uncongenial spirits, not because of His reticence, but simply on account of their moral obliquity. Still, a quotation from Isaiah (Isa. vi. 9) and our Lord's own language imply a deliberate intention that such people should not receive the teaching. The action of Christ here must be considered side by side with His repeated expressions of a generous desire to welcome all who truly submit to Him, and in the light of His distress at the failure of those who rejected His message at Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (Luke x. 13, 15), and, above all, at Jerusalem

(xiii. 34). The justification seems to be that those who were unwilling to follow His teaching, and who therefore could not benefit by a barely intellectual understanding of its deeper mysteries, ought not to be allowed to profane those mysteries, because the profanation would injure them while it dishonoured Him.

Among the conditions stated in the fourth Gospel most emphasis is laid on the new birth, which here takes the place of repentance in the Synoptics as the first step, although it is a deeper experience. In harmony with the general teaching of this Gospel the idea of birth is not merely concerned with a change of thought and intention; it points to the beginning of a new life. While repentance presents itself as a change on man's part, the new birth has its origin in God. The general usage of the Greek word ἄνωθεν * in the New Testament suggests that it should be translated "from above," and that the words of Christ should read, "Except a man be born *from above* he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). The birth is plainly Divine in its origin, for its source is the Holy Spirit—it is "that which is born of the Spirit." In reference to this event Christ refers to the free and mysterious movement of the Spirit of God, coming invisibly, we know not how, like the wind. Thus the first condition is associated with the work of the Spirit.

A more prominent position is assigned to faith here than in the Synoptics, and its deeper character is revealed. It is also now more closely associated

* See John xix. 11, 23; Gal. iv. 9; James i. 17, iii. 15.

with Christ Himself. The Son of Man must be lifted up, "that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life" (iii. 15). In the discourse on the bread of life Jesus identifies faith in Him with eating His flesh. Thus in one place He says, "He that believeth hath eternal life" (vi. 47), and in another, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life" (vi. 54). The parallelism of the two expressions should not lead us to weaken the force of the second, but rather to give a deeper meaning to the first than we should otherwise assign to it, because the whole current of our Lord's language is directed to the end of our realising living relations with Himself as the food of eternal life. Thus faith is seen to be a personal appropriation of Jesus Christ. Our Lord's words anticipate the ideas which underlie the Lord's Supper. That feast in the Synoptics illustrates to the eye what the discourse of Christ in St. John explains to the mind.

It would seem that the limitations of discipleship are stronger in the fourth Gospel than they are in the Synoptics. Christ has all, to whom it is given by His Father (vi. 65), which implies that others have not the gift and therefore cannot be included in the fold. In controversy with the Jews He contrasts the children of the devil with the children of Abraham and of God (viii. 39, 44, 47). But we have seen already * that our Lord's utterances on this subject are associated with blame for those whom He characterises with so much apparent harshness. It was their own conduct that had brought them into

* Page 49.

this deplorable state. They had sinned with open eyes. If they had been blind, they would have been excused (ix. 41). Moreover, there is no ground for thinking that Jesus considered their condition to be hopeless. Had He thought so, would it not have been useless for Him to argue with them? And does not His treatment of them show that He was trying to reach their consciences? This is very different from the Gnostic idea of two orders of men for ever distinguished by nature and fate.

VII. THE NEW ETHICS

By far the greater part of the teachings of Jesus Christ recorded in the Gospels was devoted to the practical guidance of His disciples in the conduct of life along the path that He was also indicating by His own example. He took no interest in the elaboration of dogma or the performance of ritual. The strength of His mind and soul, His pregnant thought and regal will, all the passion of His enthusiasm and all the fire of His indignation, were expended on the behaviour of men and women towards God and their neighbours. Nevertheless, when torn out of their place in the circle of His instruction, the pure ethics of the Gospels may seem to consist of quite unattainable, though most beautiful, counsels of perfection. It is only while they are taken in their right bearings as laws of the kingdom of God that they can be accepted as immediately practicable. Jesus did not propose the precepts of

the Sermon on the Mount to the Jews' Sanhedrim or the Roman Senate. Evidently they would not work in an unchristian society, and they were never offered to any such community. They were given to the disciples in a retreat apart from the miscellaneous crowd of sightseers who flocked to witness the miracles (see Matt. v. 1). They only admit of being embodied in the social order of any nation in proportion as the population has already become Christian. Laws of the kingdom of God can be put in operation just so far as the kingdom is dominant, and no farther. We must bear in mind this qualification of their scope and range as we proceed to examine the details of the new ethics introduced by our Lord.

It was the peculiar mission of the prophets of Israel to insist on the intimate union of religion and righteousness in contrast to the common practices of her neighbours, among whom the cult of the gods was divorced from morality. In the days of our Lord the Pharisees professed to maintain this mission, and they scornfully condemned the Sadducean priests who were satisfied with the temple ritual to the neglect of the personal demands of the law. But the Pharisees themselves were really the greatest offenders in setting up an artificial standard that was only a screen for the neglect of real righteousness. Now Jesus recovers the position of the prophets, and advances beyond it.

He shows that our highest duty is that owed to God, for the first commandment is to love God intelligently and strongly (Mark xii. 30). This duty had been prescribed in the old law; and here, as in other

matters, our Lord's originality did not involve a formal breach with the past. Even an inquiring scribe knew of the supreme duty (Luke x. 27). But Christ gave it a new prominence and a much deeper meaning. From Him it comes to us clothed in all the force and beauty of His revelation of the Father. Now out of this fundamental obligation certain great requirements flow—supreme among them, and comprehending all others, that of doing God's will. For Christ Himself the will of God is the only law of life; in realising His ideal as our exemplar He presents a picture of absolute obedience to God. The sole condition on which He consents to recognise any people as His near relatives is that they too do God's will. In His model prayer He puts the honour of God, the coming of the Divine kingdom, and the doing of God's will on earth before any thoughts of personal need. He deprecates anxiety about temporal affairs, not so much because this is irksome to us, but rather, as He expressly says, because it hinders us in the pursuit of "the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. vi. 33). His beautiful exhortations to trust in the providential goodness of God are directly deduced from His stern declaration that "No man can serve two masters." It is immediately after saying "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," that He adds, "*Therefore* I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life," etc. (vi. 24, 25). Conversely, sin is a personal offence against God. The prodigal son confesses that he has sinned "against heaven" as well as before his father (Luke xv. 18).

Another great characteristic of the ethics of Christ

is supplied by their positive spirit. The requirements of the casuistry prevalent in the days of our Lord were for the most part negative. Even the decalogue consists chiefly of prohibitions; and later Judaism far exceeded the written law in its restrictions, while it relaxed the requirements of the great active duties. Thus to keep oneself from defilement was the leading aim of Pharisaism. Our Lord was blamed for His indifference to this question of purification. As a matter of fact, His indifference only extended to foolish ceremonial forms, and did not relate to real contamination. But in His treatment of moral questions He was not satisfied with demanding abstinence from evil. He was much more concerned with the doing of good. This was the rule of His own life. He was described by St. Peter as One who "went about doing good" (Acts x. 38). An immaculate saint who never worked for the service of God and man—if such a person existed—would come under our Lord's most severe censure. Thus the man who is represented as building on the sand is not charged with any offence: his life ends in ruin simply because he fails to do what Christ requires. Dives is tormented by the flames of Gehenna for no act of cruelty to Lazarus, but it would seem solely for neglecting to assist his miserable neighbour with the wealth which he squandered on his own luxuries. In the great parables of judgment the foolish virgins, the man of one talent, and the people who are set on the left hand of the Judge are none of them accused of any transgression: in every case the fault is the neglect of some positive action. The Samaritan who showed

kindness to a fellow-man in need is a typical example, in contrast to a priest and a Levite to whom no vice is attributed. Clearly the drift of Christ's exhortations is all in the direction of active service. His people are compared to labourers hired to work in a vineyard, stewards entrusted with responsible functions, traders expected to invest the money of a capitalist—not idle ascetics secluded from all contamination.

Nevertheless, no teaching of our Lord is more striking or more original than His repeated insistence on the truth that good and evil are, primarily, concerns of the interior life. This was of first importance in opposition to the hypocrisy of a religion of superficial pretences and barren forms—a religion that consisted in ostentatious prayers, fasts, and almsgiving apart from spiritual worship, contrition, and brotherly kindness. Here the preaching of Christ most heavily assailed the apparent goodness of the most respected people of His day. But it contained more than the indignant denunciation of shams and lies which any true prophet such as Amos or Isaiah would have uttered. Jesus immediately enlarges the value of the life within. He goes back from deeds to words, from words to thoughts, from separate thoughts to the life out of which they spring. Men are to be judged for every idle word (Matt. xii. 36). Hatred and lust are treated as murder and adultery, because the crime is in the intention (vers. 21–32). Swearing is forbidden (vers. 33–7), because it treats the obligation of truth-speaking as external and variable, since it implies that without the oath

veracity would not be expected.* The charity, purity, and truthfulness which Christ requires are all regarded as products of the interior life; and so are their opposite sins: "Out of the heart proceed" all kinds of evil things (Mark vii. 21). Therefore defilement is from within—*i.e.*, it is not got by bodily contact with what is unclean, but produced by the outflowing of unclean thoughts and words and deeds from an unclean heart. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are to be practised in secret, lest the public show of them should lead to hypocrisy. Jesus was accustomed to retire to the solitude of the mountains for His own private prayer, and He modestly checked the spreading fame of His miracles as though it pained Him. In particular two great reasons for the severity of this principle of inwardness are supplied.

The first is found in the penetrating vision of God, who sees in secret. It implies that God's view of

* It must be remembered that we are here concerned with laws of the kingdom of God, not with the regulations of a police-court. If a civil state which has not yet reached the level of Christ's legislation imposes oaths, our Lord's example in submitting to the adjuration of the high-priest shows that acquiescence is not forbidden. In condemning swearing, Jesus was not contemplating this situation. He was reprobating the habit of taking oaths in every-day life. Undoubtedly this was the primary aim of His words. The absoluteness of the prohibition seems to go farther, however. Here is a law of the kingdom. When the kingdom is universally established, even the judicature will be able to dispense with the coarse expedient of obtaining evidence on oath. Many think that it would be a more Christian course to abandon it at once, while imposing the penalty of perjury on false witnessing.

our conduct is of supreme importance, although that is precisely what people who "study appearances" ignore. In His own actions our Lord showed Himself blankly indifferent to the blame of men. Criticised adversely by the religious orthodoxy of His day, He remained perfectly serene, because He was assured that His Father was "well pleased" with Him, and that was all the approval He cared for.

The other ground for the rigour of the principle of inwardness lies in the very constitution of nature. The quality of the fruit is determined by the quality of the tree. You must first make the tree good if you would have good fruit (Luke vi. 43, 44).

Stern as this principle is in its intensity, when regarded extensively it is seen to introduce a large and gracious liberty. Jesus moved in a free atmosphere. He snapped the cords of the precisionists, and trampled down their carefully trimmed hedges. He also liberated His disciples from external restraints on the plain condition that they were to be guided by internal motives. Thus the irksome details of casuistry are quite foreign to the ethics of Christ. The Christian is to be governed by principle, not by rule; and therefore He must become a law to himself. Inasmuch as it was the method of Christ to teach by concrete examples, He seems to lay down definite lines of conduct for individual cases. But it would be contrary to His intention to apply His words with pedantic literalness. Even of these words it must be said that the bare letter kills, while it is the spirit of them that gives life.

On the other hand, while our Lord's teaching is

individualistic in regard to the springs and sources of conduct, because it directs attention to the secret recesses of the soul, to "the abysmal depths of personality," and while it starts from personal life and character, its outlook and aim are distinctly social. The Christian is not to regard himself as a solitary unit; nor is he to spend his strength in the cultivation of his own well-being. He is a member of a society; nay, one of a family. The Fatherhood of God necessarily leads to the brotherhood of man. Therefore conduct cannot be determined with regard to abstract ideas of goodness alone: it must be shaped and governed according to its influence on society. This is the key to some of the most striking sayings of Christ which, considered by themselves, sound extravagant and unreasonable.

It is a highly significant fact that when our Lord had answered the question as to which was the greatest commandment by quoting that which requires a supreme love of God, He volunteered to add the second: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Jesus developed the teaching of this old precept in three respects:—

1. He gave it a new emphasis. He brought it into the light, and set it before men as the ruling principle of their conduct in dealing one with another. This He did in clear words, but more vividly in almost every deed of His life. Living entirely for others, He set the pattern of the Christian life.

2. He enlarged the notion of the neighbour. To the question "Who is my neighbour?" He replies by giving the parable of the Good Samaritan, which

shows that the idea of neighbourliness is not to be limited by national distinctions—as the most cultivated Athenians had held; nor by religious differences —as the most pious Jews taught; nor by ignorance and strangeness—as the world still holds; nor indeed by any conceivable limit. The Samaritan sees a stray Jew in need, and helps him. That is neighbourliness. It is our duty, then, to love all men whom we may happen to come across, and to show kindness to strangers and aliens as well as to acquaintances and comrades; in national affairs to treat the rights of foreigners and people of very different civilisations with as much consideration as we would give to our own interests.

3. Christ pointed out the effects of this love to one's neighbour. His golden rule, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke vi. 31), was just the same principle shaped for practical application. The idea of love must not be allowed to evaporate in an idle sentiment. It must manifest itself in conduct, in what we *do*. Our Lord showed the working of this principle in illustrative examples. Thus it is seen in hospitality. The principle of loving one's neighbour as oneself must break down the exclusiveness of society. To invite guests who will make an adequate return is not the height of hospitality. The Christian host will invite the poor who cannot pay for their meal by the polite method of giving another meal. The same principle is more manifest in the generosity that helps the needy. Instead of refusing aid to people in difficulties, or only lending to them with a hope of receiving our

money back again, the neighbourly act is to give to them outright, and to expect no recompense—although the gift may be denominated a loan to spare the feelings of the recipient (ver. 34). Christ spent His own life in healing the sick and helping the suffering out of pure compassion. Then the suppression of revenge is another application of the golden rule. Evidently this is what our Lord means by His clear, strong utterances in recommendation of non-resistance. To let the robber take the coat as well as the cloak, and to turn the left cheek to one who has smitten the right cheek, are the very opposites of revenge. Such actions appear absurd and preposterous until we have realised the inspiring principle of neighbourly love which lies behind them. The Christian is to treat his assailant as a man whom he loves as himself. Jesus taught this lesson by His own behaviour, when under insult and outrage He submitted patiently and was "led as a lamb to the slaughter," because He was suffering for the good of those who ill-used Him. The duty of forgiveness goes beyond that of passive non-resistance, since it requires us to welcome the offender to our friendship. Such an act is necessarily limited by the preliminary requirement of repentance and confession (Luke xvii. 4). But when that condition is fulfilled the duty is to forgive ungrudgingly and repeatedly—seventy times seven times, if as many occasions arise (Matt. xviii. 22). Lastly, there is the duty of holding charitable opinions. The disciple of Christ is not to judge others (vii. 1). He is not to concern himself with the officious interference of pointing out the mote in his brother's eye while a beam is in

his own eye. He is rather to look to his own fault, and to discover that his censorious spirit is far worse than the slight defect he is pharisaically blaming in his brother.

Our Lord, who had no faults of His own to amend, affords us the highest possible example of kindness to foes by praying for His enemies on the cross, and by even dying for the world that rejected Him. If the Christian is to be the follower of Christ, he must imitate most closely that which is most characteristic of his Leader—*i.e.*, the conduct which renders good for evil, even in the most supreme sacrifice of self. This conduct is primarily related to individuals. A man is to love his neighbour, not merely his Church, his nation, or mankind. He is to regard himself as a member of a community, and to arrange his conduct in view of his social relations; but his aim is not that of the Greek patriot—to exalt his city; nor that of the Jew—to advance his race; nor that of the ecclesiastic—to glorify his Church: he is a brother who is expected to study the welfare of the other members of God's family, and not perpetrate that absurdity of ancient politics and mediæval ecclesiasticism—the sacrificing of men and women to the idol of an abstraction.

Nevertheless, here too we may notice the germinal ideas of the doctrine of the Church. One of these is social Christianity. The word ἐκκλησία is twice ascribed to Christ—in the first case standing for a definite local community (Matt. xviii. 17), and in the second used with reference to the whole body of Christians (xvi. 18). It has been questioned whether

this Greek word is the correct rendering of our Lord's Aramaic phrase. But the doubt is not of great moment. While the Christians had not yet broken with Judaism, while they were still worshipping in the temple and in their local synagogues, they could not have been formed into a separate ecclesiastical community. Moreover, until Christ had led them into some clear conception of His truth they had not the materials for Church order and life. But the new condition did not come suddenly into being. The Church was a growth out of the earlier condition of discipleship. This development was necessary. Christianity is essentially social, because it is brotherly. Christ draws His followers together in drawing them to Himself, because thereby He infuses in them His own brotherly spirit. Thus when He was removed it was natural that they should meet together as members of one family, owning a common Father and a common Brother. Moreover, the teachings of Christ constantly presuppose the fellowship of Christians. Thus He gives a special promise to encourage united prayer (xviii. 19, 20).

An important aspect of the life of the Church is seen in those teachings of Christ which relate to the influence His people are destined to exercise in the world. They are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and they are directly commissioned to make disciples of all the nations (Matt. xxviii. 19). The Apostles were chosen to be the leading instruments of the great mission, to be "fishers of men." The greater part of our Lord's teaching consisted in the training of the twelve; and He bade His disciples

pray for more labourers to be sent into the harvest-field. In addition to this primary duty of mission preaching, the Apostles—represented by their spokesman, St. Peter—were ordained to act in regard to Christian morals as the rabbis acted in the administration of the Jewish law, *i.e.*, to explain what was right and what was wrong, a process commonly designated by the phrase "binding and loosing" (xvi. 19).

The fourth Gospel treats more of the spiritual experiences that lie behind the ethics. Righteousness is here set forth in two great ideas. First, it is doing God's will (John v. 30; vi. 38). Christ expects His disciples to keep His "commandments" (xiv. 15). Here we have an evident allusion to such precepts as those of the Sermon on the Mount, although St. John does not anywhere recite them, as the Synoptics do. Now the stress is laid on the spirit of obedience, rather than on definite actions. This obedience is not servile; it is intelligent, free, based on love. Second, righteousness is rooted in truth (viii. 44), which here assumes almost a concrete form, so real and solid is it. Thus right Christian conduct is truth in action. On the other hand, sin is denounced as wilful, open-eyed misconduct (ix. 41), which leads to bondage (viii. 34) and moral blindness (ix. 39). It is the opposite of "doing the truth"; shows itself in a lying spirit; is directly diabolical in character, so that men who give way to it are named "children of the devil" (viii. 44); is most clearly revealed in the rejection of Christ (viii. 46, 47; xv. 22, 23); and is so prevalent and yet so little recognised

that one great object of the coming of the Paraclete will be to "convict the world in respect of sin" (xvi. 8). This Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, is also the inspiration of righteousness.

Among Christians brotherly love is strongly insisted on. It is the object of Christ's *new* commandment, and a natural result of His own love to His people (xv. 12).

Lastly, the social aspect of Christianity is recognised. The immediate followers of Christ are like sheep in a fold. He has others outside the fold; but all will at length become one flock (x. 16).

Christ's Treatment of the Old Testament.

This subject naturally comes up for consideration under the topic of ethics, because it is chiefly on moral grounds that our Lord traverses the lines of the older legislation. At first sight His conduct is perplexing and apparently contradictory. He was familiar with the Old Testament, and He quoted it freely; not only because it was an authority with His hearers, but also because He attached to it Divine authority for Himself—*e.g.*, in His temptation in the wilderness. He said that not one jot or tittle of the law could fail (Matt. v. 18). To neglect the least commandment was to incur the penalty of taking the lowest place in the kingdom of heaven; to keep and teach the commandments fully was to earn a high place (ver. 19). The whole duty of man is deduced from precepts of the law. Jesus was accused of breaking the law; but there is no evidence that He ever did so. He often broke

through the scribes' *fence* of the law; He distinctly repudiated popular application of the law: but He did not anticipate the attitude of St. Paul in renouncing the law itself. He was a Jew by birth, and He lived as a Jew, worshipping in the synagogue, attending the national festivals, paying the temple tax. On the other hand, He not only rejected mischievous traditions of the rabbis; He distinctly abrogated certain precepts of the Pentateuch—*e.g.*, the *lex talionis* and the law of divorce—treating them in the historical spirit, as of a temporary character, and as shaped in accordance with the capacities of an inferior moral status. We must look for the key to our Lord's independent action in these matters in His own teaching. He said He came "to fulfil" the law and the prophets. By fulfilment He did not signify the actual performance of what was required by the law (as in Rom. xiii. 8), nor the realising of prophecy in the event. His teachings plainly show that He meant a completion—*i.e.*, the development of the Mosaic commands and the prophetic instructions up to the perfection of the Divine purpose that lay in them.* Christ found the underlying idea which was but inadequately attained in the Jewish Scriptures, and He realised it fully in His higher ethics, although the deliverance of the kernel sometimes involved the destruction of the husk. Two of our Lord's great principles facilitated this process. First, the principle of inwardness led to the repudiation of formal regulations that were not always true to their original purpose in the circumstances of later times. Second,

* For this idea of fulfilment see Matt. xxiii. 32; Mark i. 15.

the principle of brotherly love was applied as a touchstone to laws which had been carried out irrespective of the good of mankind. Jesus taught boldly that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark ii. 27); therefore the Son of Man who had come to save man and rule him had a right over the Sabbath; therefore, too, the Sabbath must be utilised for man's good, not stiffened into a yoke of distressful and unprofitable formalism. Jesus did not proclaim the abolition of sacrifices and other temple ceremonies. But His teaching was a solvent beneath which, in course of time, all such relics of a mechanical ritual were bound to disappear. His practical genius, His large sympathy, His brotherliness, interpreting to us the mind and heart of God, had a natural affinity with the words of Hosea, which He once quoted: "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matt. ix. 13). He plainly hinted that it would be impossible to keep the new wine of the Christian thought and life in the old, stiff wine-skins of Judaism, or to use the gospel merely to patch the ragged garment of the law. Such utterances show that, though our Lord did not expressly anticipate "Paulinism," He sowed seeds of which the bold novelties of the great Hellenist might fairly be regarded as the legitimate development.

VIII. THE FUTURE

In His treatment of questions concerning the future, Jesus Christ made use of the current language of His day, and even of the imagery that was most

familiar to His contemporaries. Indeed, He did little to lift the veil that hides from us the circumstances of existence beyond the grave: His teaching on this subject has immense weight and significance, however: first, because it affirms with unhesitating certainty the great truth of a future life; secondly, because it gives a spiritual conception of that life in opposition to popular materialistic views; and thirdly, because it lays down the conditions on which future blessedness may be attained. Moreover, His predictions of the approaching judgment and the Parousia—subjects which belong primarily to national rather than to private life—are full and explicit. These predictions demand separate treatment. Let us take them first.

Jesus distinctly announced to His disciples that He would return to earth in splendour and power (Mark viii. 38; Luke xxi. 27). Such an idea was quite strange to Jewish thought, which knew nothing of a second advent of the Messiah; but it was necessitated by the fact that a premature death was fast approaching to cut short the earthly life of Jesus before He had accomplished the work of judgment or established the rule of might and blessedness which the prophets had foretold.

Our Lord portrays His return in language that reminds us of the Old Testament theophanies, such as the coming of God in earthquake and tempest (Psalm xviii. 7–15), and His manifestations of Himself in the doom of nations (l. 4–6). Is it not then unreasonable to conceive the descriptions of the coming of the Son of Man with clouds of glory and angelic attendants so literally as to anticipate a

visible pageant, especially when we give due weight to a pictorial style of speech? Besides, it is very evident that these pictures are based on Daniel's dream (Dan. vii. 13). Now, inasmuch as the world-kingdoms of that dream were never seen in history as monstrous beasts coming up from the sea, is it not inconsistent with the rest of the picture to expect the last scene—that which represents the kingdom from heaven—to be realised historically in the visible appearance which it assumes in the dream?

But a great truth is here taught—viz., that Jesus Christ will return for judgment and rule. Further, His language is as definite as words can make it in asserting that this is to happen during the lifetime of His contemporaries. Some of those standing around Him are not to die before they see Him coming in the glory of His Father with His angels (Matt. xvi. 27, 28). In concluding an account of His second advent He says, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away until all these things be accomplished"; and then, to give emphasis to His prediction, He adds, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away" (xxiv. 34, 35). An examination of the details of the Vision of Judgment to which this solemn language refers shows that it has a very evident connection with the overthrow of the Jewish State and Church. The "abomination of desolation" will stand in "a holy place," and then they "that are in *Judæa*" are to "flee unto the mountains" (ver. 16)—a warning which the Jerusalem Christians took when they retreated to Pella on the approach of Titus and his

legions.* The time will be most trying for mothers with young children. Let the disciples pray that their flight be not in winter or on a Sabbath.

Nevertheless, the teaching of Christ has a wider outlook. The parable of the Sheep and the Goats describes a judgment of the nations (Matt. xxv. 32); the parable of the Vineyard anticipates a time after the judgment of the Jews when the vineyard shall be let out to other husbandmen (xxi. 41); and a similar idea is seen in the parable of the Marriage Feast, which is to be supplied with guests after those first invited have declined to come (xxii. 9, 10). It is quite according to the analogy of all prophecy that there should be no perspective in the vision of the future. Our Lord declared His own ignorance of the day and hour of His coming. It is not less characteristic of prophecy that its principles should realise themselves in repeated historical fulfilments. This is suggested by the words, "*Wheresoever* the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." Christ returns in every Divine judgment; He is present in the clouds, triumphing in every victory of the kingdom of God.

In the next place, we have our Lord's teachings concerning the great hereafter. The Sadducees denied

* Keim, Pfleiderer, and others consider the Vision of Judgment in Matthew to be part of a "Little Apocalypse," some lost Jewish work, and not a genuine utterance of Jesus Christ. But there are two decided objections to this view: (1) we have no reference to the work in all literature; (2) the words were accepted by very early Christians as our Lord's. Could these people have been so greatly deceived? See Beyschlag, vol. i., p. 184.

a future life; the Essenes limited it to the continued existence of souls; the Pharisees taught that there would be a bodily resurrection, and their idea was predominant in the time of Christ. Our Lord accepted the view of the Pharisees; but He so transformed and elevated it that all its grossness disappeared. He never betrayed a shadow of doubt as to the existence of life beyond the grave. On the contrary, He affirmed it with serene assurance, and, when challenged by sceptical inquirers, proceeded to deduce a proof of it from an authority which they were bound to acknowledge. Pointing to an Old Testament title of God, He declared that the use of it by Moses implied that the patriarchs were really alive even in His day (Luke xx. 38). But while our Lord's words are thus luminous and emphatic, the supremely significant teaching, that which flashes a flood of light on the question of life after death, springs from His own example. He revealed the risen life by Himself rising from the dead. He is the firstfruits; and in His resurrection we see both the actual commencement of the Christian resurrection and indications of its nature. First, we have an instance of the fact of life after death; then the peculiar relation of Christ to mankind renders this prophetic and even causative of a similar experience in His brethren; lastly, the peculiar actions of the risen Christ show that, since He did not return to the limitations and occupations of His earlier life, the risen life possesses unique powers in freedom from materialistic conditions. He could present Himself within closed doors, disappear before the eyes of men, walk

with His friends unrecognised by them, and yet prove His identity beyond doubt when He chose.

In two particulars our Lord's language about the resurrection is marked by distinctive characteristics. One is in regard to the nature of the risen life. He repudiated the low conception of it suggested by the Sadducees, who tried to throw ridicule over it by introducing a trivial, vulgar question. Our Lord replied that the risen "neither marry, nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels" (Luke xx. 35, 36). The resurrection, then, is not to a physical, animal life.

The other distinctive characteristic of our Lord's teaching about the resurrection is the assertion of its limitation. It is not for all men: it is only an inheritance of the redeemed. There is no resurrection for the impenitent wicked. In the important passage which describes His argument with the Sadducees, Jesus speaks of those "that are accounted *worthy to attain* to that age and the resurrection from the dead" (ver. 35), plainly implying that those who are not accounted worthy do not attain to these ends. They only who thus attain "are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." Future blessedness consists primarily, and indeed essentially, in the possession of eternal life. The great privilege is to attain unto the resurrection. The narrow way leads to life. Jesus was no pessimist. His doctrine, which has some affinities with Buddhism in its insistence on self-renunciation and in its pity for the miserable, is here directly opposed to the Oriental view of perfection. Not *nirvana*, but life, is the end of the highest

spiritual endeavour. Therefore in itself life is good. To possess the powers and faculties of an undying and incorruptible life is regarded by Christ as the sum and substance of personal well-being.

Then our Lord cheers His servants with the prospect of rewards, but so as to exclude a low, mercenary view of them. The King's feast is free to all kinds of people, irrespective of merit. While in the service of Christ deserts are considered, the recompense is more than wages. The parable of the Pounds shows that it far exceeds the worth of the service rendered; for the charge of whole cities is given in return for fidelity in trade with money. This parable also teaches that the reward is to vary with the service rendered (Luke xix. 16–19). But it raises the subject above considerations which might instil mere greed for selfish pleasure. The reward for faithful service in the present life is the privilege of larger service hereafter. It is promotion. Christ sets this heavenly reward of His in contrast to the poor earthly payment of the praise of men (Matt. vi. 1–4)

Although our Lord promises no resurrection for the impenitent wicked, He teaches that they will have conscious existence after death. Nowhere in the Bible do we meet with more terrible language describing the fate of those who die in their sins than in the words that fell from the lips of the Saviour of the world. He freely employed the most fearful imagery of His day. He spoke of the *undying* worm and the *unquenchable* fire of Gehenna—language borrowed from the description of a destruction of unburied corpses in Isa. lxvi. 24—to show that the terrors of the world

to come are irresistible. Men cannot evade them or trample on them. Dives cannot cross the gulf that separates him from Abraham's bosom.

Future punishment is largely negative. The man without the wedding garment is expelled from the king's feast; the foolish virgins are shut out of the bridal festivities; the idle servant loses his money, and is cast into outer darkness. But this punishment is also fearfully positive. We read of "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. xxv. 30). It is better to lose an offending hand, or foot, or eye, than to be cast into the unquenchable fire of Gehenna (Mark ix. 43–50). As there is no resurrection for those who suffer after death, their sufferings cannot be physical; they will have no body, therefore Christ uses the popular language in a metaphorical sense. But this does not imply that the sufferings will be less terrible. The worst pains are those that the soul feels. Indeed, all pain exists only in the consciousness.

Many utterances of our Lord point to destruction rather than pain as the doom of ruined souls: the broad road leads to destruction; the house on the sand is swept away by the flood, etc. It is not to be supposed that there is any contradiction between the ideas of painful punishment and destruction; for the two things might not be contemporaneous, and the suffering might end in destruction. Moreover, the destruction might not involve extinction of being. We know that physiological death is far from annihilation. The dead body continues for a while as a decaying corpse, and the elements of this body exist after they have been dissipated. Death is the loss of a mysterious collection

of powers, not the extermination of that in which they reside. The Greek word (ἀπόλλυμι) most commonly used for the doom of sin has a wide meaning, and signifies to *ruin* (*e.g.*, Mark i. 24; ii. 22), and to *lose* (*e.g.*, Mark ix. 41; Luke xv. 4, 8, 24) as well as to *destroy*.

It is to be observed that our Lord speaks of gradations of punishment. One will be beaten with many stripes, another with few. It will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Nineveh, Tyre, etc., than for the cities that rejected Christ.

Did Jesus teach the possibility of restoration after death? He said, concerning a person guilty of an unpardonable sin, "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, nor in that which is to come" (Matt. xii. 32), words which seem to imply that other sins might be forgiven hereafter. Perhaps the "stripes" with which a servant is beaten indicate corrective punishment. The strongest expression—that about going away "into eternal punishment"—might be read "into age-long chastisement" (εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον); and the use of a term sometimes meaning chastisement rather than a word designating vindictive punishment (*e.g.*, τιμωρία, Heb. x. 29), is thought by some to hint at remedial possibilities.* Above all, our Lord's revelation of the Fatherhood of God seems to conflict with the idea of a hopeless future. But all these hints are vague and uncertain. Christ did not make any assertion about a future

* This distinction between κόλασις and τιμωρία is expounded by Aristotle (*Rhet.*, i. 10). On the other hand, Trench shows that the word κόλασις was used with the more severe signification in Hellenistic Greek (*Syn. of the New Test.*, p. 22).

restoration of the lost after death, nor did He utter any prophecy at all concerning the infinite future.

The idea of Divine judgment is very prominent in the fourth Gospel, but with this peculiarity, that it is there generally assigned to the present age. The judgment has already commenced, and is now in progress. It is in the hands of Christ, who says, "For judgment came I into this world" (John ix. 39). We have not to wait for the Parousia before we see Him judging the world. Yet the primary object of the advent of our Lord was not judgment, but salvation; thus He said, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (xii. 47). The verbal contradiction is easily solved. The aim and purpose of Christ was to save; but the result of His coming, since He was rejected, was to judge. This is further explained by reference to the nature of our Lord's judgment, which is not the external exercise of His authority, but the internal influence of His truth: "The word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (ver. 48). This passage shows that our Lord taught that there would be a future judgment, a lesson which seems also to be indicated elsewhere (*e.g.*, v. 22–7). Still, the fourth Gospel drops the Daniel-like imagery of the Parousia in clouds of glory and its associated picture of the grand assize. Christ will come again, but His advent will be spiritual, into the hearts of His people. The true glorification of the Son is in His passion and during His earthly life (xiii. 31).

This Gospel emphatically teaches the doctrine of future punishment. They who harden themselves in sin will pass under condemnation, and their doom

will be destruction. Fruitless Christians will be dealt with like barren branches that are cut off from the vine and burnt (xv. 6).

Even more evidently than in the Synoptics the central idea of the future of the blessed embodied in St. John's version of Christ's teaching is that of eternal life, which is also associated with the resurrection here, as in the earlier accounts. Jesus distinctly teaches that the resurrection is for those who have His life in them. Thus, when Martha speaks of the resurrection as a matter of course to occur "at the last day," Jesus corrects her. It is not an incident of a certain *day*; it is connected with the person of Christ, who says, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live" (xi. 25). This limits the resurrection to those who are in vital union with Christ. The same idea is taught in the discourse about the bread of life, where three times Jesus says that He will raise up at the last day *those who believe on Him* (vi. 39, 40, 54).* Of this life we have full assurance. It is in the house of God, and with large room—"many resting-places." If it were not so, Christ would have told us. He goes Himself to prepare a place for His friends.

* In one passage only St. John describes our Lord as predicting a "resurrection of judgment" for those "that have done ill" (v. 29). This solitary expression is directly opposed to the explicit descriptions of the resurrection elsewhere in this Gospel, as well as in the Synoptics. Should we not, therefore, infer that St. John has here unconsciously assimilated the language of Christ to that of Daniel, which he almost quotes?

THE THEOLOGY OF THE APOSTLES

UNSCIENTIFIC methods of study, based on *à priori* notions of inspiration, long hindered the perception of any differences among the ideas of the early Christian teachers or any development of doctrine in the New Testament, and it is only in comparatively recent times that historical criticism has been applied to the sacred documents, with the result that diversity of type and growth of thought have been discovered in apostolic teaching.

The first use of the new process was so crude and violent that this process was at once gravely discredited in the minds of sober students. Its foremost leader and most brilliant exponent was Ferdinand Christian Baur. That daring critic maintained that the primitive Church was rent into two fiercely antagonistic parties—on the one side the original Apostles, Peter, John, James, etc., holding an intensely Jewish form of Christianity, represented by the Apocalypse; on the other side St. Paul, keenly anti-Jewish, and therefore repudiated by the Apostles, whom in turn he is said to have disparaged scornfully. St. Paul's views are extracted from his four greatest

Epistles—those to the Galatians, the Corinthians, and the Romans. The rest of the New Testament is affirmed to be of late origin, and most of it designed to reconcile the contending parties, and so to establish in the second century the doctrine known as Catholic in subsequent ages. This extravagant theory, which is commonly designated the Tübingen hypothesis, has been discredited among the disciples of its founder. In a similar spirit, however, Pfleiderer has advanced a scheme of primitive doctrine, which avoids the difficulties of its predecessor, although it conjures up new notions of an even more objectionable character. Perceiving that no cleavage of the Church lasting down into the second century can be discovered either in the New Testament or in history, he holds that an agreement between the opposing parties was brought about much earlier than Baur supposed. But he considers that the most characteristic ideas of Christianity—its universalism in particular—did not originate in the mind of Jesus Christ, nor even spring from Jewish soil, but were products of Hellenism, consequences of the application of the wider Greek thought to the intense but narrow notions of primitive Christian teaching. Now, it is certainly a question of much interest, and one that has been too much neglected, how far Greek intellect has developed Christian doctrine along its own earlier lines. But Pfleiderer lands himself in the extraordinary position of virtually denying that Christ is the founder of Christianity. It has been shown, however, by such careful scholars as Lechler, Weiss, and Beyschlag, that the teachings of the several Apostles are in

essential harmony with the life and thought of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, even when we accept this view, important products of criticism remain, its substantial fruit which no theory can dissolve. In particular, these are the discovery of variations of type, and the perception of development in doctrine.

Three main types of apostolic doctrine may be unmistakeably distinguished. First, we have the primitive type, represented by the earlier speeches in the Acts of the Apostles, the history of the Judæan Churches, and the Epistles of St. James and St. Peter. This is more or less Jewish throughout, relying much on the Old Testament, though with a preference for the prophets, and not readily recognising a breach between Christianity and Judaism; in tone it is practical and unspeculative. Next comes the great Pauline type, vividly illustrated in the life of the Apostle, amply expounded in his writings, and reflected from another standpoint in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This is vigorously anti-legal, revealing the emancipation of Christianity from Judaism, and the more spiritual nature of the gospel, its cosmopolitan character, its universalism. The Pauline teaching is both more mystical and more dialectical than the primitive type. It opens up the deepest spiritual experiences, and it ventures on elaborate discussions of doctrine. St. Paul is the parent of speculative Christian theology. Lastly, we meet with the Johannine type, that preserved in the writings of the fourth Evangelist. The controversy with Judaisers within the Church is now over, or it is not concerning the circles in which St. John is living during his later

years. Instead of this the Apostle is confronted with the speculations of an incipient Gnosticism originating in Judaism, but mixed up with pagan ideas. The same position is faced by St. Paul in his later epistles. We now see Christianity in contact with the thought of the Gentile world. In view of this situation the theology of St. John is both fundamental and spiritual. The Apostle is most anxious to save the first principles of the faith from being dissipated in a haze of visionary ideas. His object, therefore, is to define rather than to reason.

While a distinct progress of thought may be traced throughout the teaching of the Apostles, it is a curious fact that, with the exception of the Epistle of St. James, in which it is least observable, this progress is not mainly based on the teaching of Jesus. It starts from the person of Christ, His death, and resurrection; builds upon the facts of living Christian experience; and combines these two series of data with a new spiritual interpretation of the Old Testament, to which it appeals as the ultimate standard. Undoubtedly a certain Jewish colour is given to New Testament theology throughout, not only because it is all expounded by Jews, but also because it so intimately interweaves itself with the ideas of the ancient Scriptures. "Christian theology," says Reuss,* "originated in an examination of the relation of the gospel to the law. . . . It was born, so to speak, out of the inevitable conflict between the old ideas and the new." No one of the

* *Hist. of Christ. Theol.*, third edition (Eng. Trans.), vol. i., p. 285.

New Testament writers takes up the position held by Marcion a century later, when that bold and able thinker repudiated the Old Testament as distinctly opposite in character to the New. The apostolic writers followed Jesus Christ in looking for the fulfilment of the Old in the New. Thus they taught a doctrine of development. Then, under the influence of the Holy Spirit which, as Jesus promised, was to lead them into all truth, their reflections on the death and resurrection of Christ issued in a clearer perception of the meaning of those great events, and a higher view of our Lord Himself. We may trace in particular a development of two doctrines—the doctrine of the Atonement, and the doctrine of the Person of Christ. The most elementary thought on these subjects is found in the speeches recorded in Acts. We have an advance on this in 1 Peter, and a more marked progress in St. Paul's writings. There is also a certain development of Pauline teaching in the course of the Apostle's successive writings, especially with regard to the Divine glory of Christ and His mystical union with the Church. The doctrine of Christ is still further advanced by St. John.

The most conspicuous development of thought in the Apostolic Church was so early completed that happily it has ceased to be of more than historical interest. This was the great expansion and spiritualising of the whole conception of Christianity that emerged from the conflict with Judaism.

At first the followers of our Lord had no idea of breaking off from the religion of their fathers. The

new age was to be linked on to the old age, without any revolution intervening. The first Christians—all of them Jews—did not renounce the ordinances of their national religion. They kept the fasts and feasts; when in Jerusalem, visited the temple for prayer at the regular hours; subjected themselves to Jewish vows; and circumcised their children. They had their distinguishing marks in baptism and the Lord's Supper, and in their own gatherings for prayer and conference. But at first they were only a party within the community (αἵρεσις, Acts xxiv. 14), like that of the Pharisees (xxvi. 5). With their assiduous piety they could not but win the approval of the Pharisees, who were by far the most important religious leaders of their day, and in fact they were generally popular (ii. 47). Their position was not very consistent, because, while they were rigorous observers of the law, they held that forgiveness of sins was given by the free mercy of God through Jesus Christ. Subsequently St. Paul showed that this doctrine of grace was inconsistent with the maintenance of the law. But the early Christians did not perceive the contrast, simply because they did not think out their principles to ultimate results. Meanwhile their real life was in the new faith. Unlike the Pharisees, they looked for salvation to Christ, not the law.

The first hint of a separation arose out of the deeper spiritual teaching of a Hellenist, St. Stephen. It cannot be said that the Hellenists as a body were more spiritual than the Hebrew-speaking Jews. They were in this position, however—that, living out

of reach of the temple services, they were likely to be freer from the fascination of ritualism, while owing to their access to Greek culture they were prepared to take a large and philosophical view of things. St. Stephen was accused of practically the same offence with which our Lord was charged before the high-priest—viz., blaspheming the temple (Mark xiv. 58; Acts vi. 13, 14). This fact should make us pause before we assert that his views are to be attributed to his Hellenism. Would it not be more just at best to say that his Hellenism simply prepared him for appreciating the broader aspect of the teaching of Jesus Christ? St. Stephen perceived the truth which our Lord had taught to the Samaritan woman (John iv. 21)—viz., the essential spirituality of worship. But the perception of this truth prepared for the inevitable conclusion that the formal, local, provincial temple ceremonies at Jerusalem could not be permanent. If Christianity is to triumph, it must supersede those venerable relics of an august antiquity —the sacrifices of animals by Jewish priests. St. Stephen's more spiritual apprehension of the teaching of Christ led to his becoming the protomartyr, and it also led to a severe persecution of other Christians, because strict Jews now began to see danger to their national cult. Previous persecutions had been but occasional, and then only touching the leaders of the new movement; the ground of them had been the perception that to proclaim publicly that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah amounted to nothing less than an indictment of the Jewish leaders for the murder of their God-sent King. At length—chiefly

owing to the teaching of St. Stephen—the persecution acquired a more popular basis. We have no evidence to show that the Hebrew-speaking Christians supported the great Evangelist in the new position of spiritual freedom he had taken up. In point of fact, they seem to have held aloof from him—for only Hellenists conducted his burial. Moreover, as yet no idea of dispensing with circumcision had been entertained in any section of the Church. St. Stephen did not say a word on that subject.

A much more important advance in doctrine accompanied the rapid conversion of Gentiles. There is no reason to suppose that the early Jewish Christians ever intended to confine the gospel to their own race—Jews were proverbially zealous in proselytising. But at first it was held that if Gentiles were to be admitted to the full privileges enjoyed by Jewish Christians, they must submit to the rite of circumcision—*i.e.*, that they could not be Christians without becoming Jews. Subsequently, however, the immense success of St. Paul's missions among the Gentiles forced on the question whether this was a correct view. Men of large mind began to see the absurdity of it. The course of events was solving the problem for others too. It was contrary to the spirit of the free gospel which was winning these converts, to assert that they should be put under the yoke of the law of an alien race, especially as that yoke represented a more elementary and narrow form of religious culture. Before any controversy arose on the subject Gentiles were admitted into the Church. St. Peter was constrained to entertain enlarged ideas

of the grace of God in the case of Cornelius (Acts x. 34, 35). At Antioch there grew up a powerful Gentile Church, in which the disciples were first called "Christians" (xi. 26). The Latin form of the title need not discredit the narrative in the Acts, seeing that Roman influence was powerful in the East. Now names are means of distinguishing persons and things, and the invention of the foreign name "Christian" marks the distinction between those who bear it and Jews; it shows that the Church is not identical with the synagogue.

The strict Jewish Church at Jerusalem could not at once agree to this freer position, and difficulties arose in Antioch itself, which led to the so-called council at Jerusalem. The Mother Church was then simply overwhelmed by St. Paul's testimony to the work of God among the heathen; against its prejudices it bowed to the logic of facts, and conceded the main question in dispute—that Gentile Christians were not to be compelled to undergo circumcision. But it put these Christians in the position of *Proselytes of the Gate* (Acts xv. 28, 29). That did not settle the controversy, because it resulted in a division of the Christian Church into two sections, which could not commune together, could not partake of a common *agape*. It appears that this state of schism was deliberately contemplated in the regulation that, while St. Paul was at liberty to visit the Gentiles, the three leaders, James, Peter, and John, were to confine their ministry to the Jews (Gal. ii. 9).*

* Attempts have been made to throw discredit on the historicity of the narrative in the Acts, because St. Paul does not

The next forward step was taken with the concurrence of St. Peter. When that large-hearted though timorous Apostle was at Antioch he consented to live on equal terms of brotherly communion with Gentile Christians. Although the strict party of St. James subsequently persuaded him to withdraw from this daring position, it is evident from the rebuke administered to him by St. Paul that his real conviction was clearly enough on the liberal side. It is therefore plain from what we read in the Epistle to the Galatians that the genuine standpoint of St. Peter was essentially at one with that of St. Paul in this matter (Gal. ii. 14–16). Probably St. James never reached that standpoint; at all events, the New Testament gives no hint that he did, and later tradition represents him as a strict observer of the law.* Still, although the opposers of St. Paul's views were of the party of St. James and commended by him, we cannot say that the Jerusalem leader would

refer to the council or the decree in his account of his visits to Jerusalem, which he records in his Epistle to the Galatians. It is certainly a singular omission. But St. Paul was not in the mood to appeal to the authority of the other Apostles when writing to his Galatian converts and vindicating his own apostleship. Therefore perhaps it is that he only refers to his own private intercourse with the Apostles. Then the decree did not go so far as St. Paul. It did not declare that "circumcision availeth nothing." It left it, as of value, for Jews; and his antagonists might quote this against him. At all events, it would not much serve his purpose. Besides, St. Paul does show that the main point was conceded. He states that Titus, though a Greek, was not compelled to be circumcised (Gal. ii. 3).

* Euseb., *H. E.*, ii. 23.

have sanctioned all they did. There is no evidence that he ever put himself in active opposition to St. Paul, but the contrary (ver. 9). Most likely he simply maintained the position agreed upon at the Jerusalem discussion. St. Paul went much further, and declared that circumcision was nothing (vi. 15). It was possible to maintain that though the law was not essential for Gentile Christians it might be helpful to them, and that it might be freely adopted, though it should not be authoritatively imposed. This was the idea of the Galatian perverts. St. Paul offers it uncompromising opposition. The logical consequence of his view must be that even for Jews the law is no longer binding, nor even serviceable. This also is taught by St. Paul, who shows that the law is entirely superseded by the gospel. Thus at length, though as yet only among the Pauline Churches, Christianity emerges in complete emancipation from Judaism.

THE PRIMITIVE TYPE

I. THE EARLY PREACHING

Even during our Lord's lifetime on earth the Apostles were sent forth to preach repentance (Mark vi. 12). But then their training was incomplete, and the chief work of Christ not accomplished. Jesus had not died and risen, and the Pentecostal gift had not been received. Therefore we must come down to a subsequent period for the real commencement of apostolic teaching. This we have in the speeches of St. Peter recorded by St. Luke in the

Acts of the Apostles. The archaic tone of those speeches, the absence of doctrines that appear later in the New Testament, their very deficiencies, testify to their genuineness.

The central theme of the preaching of the Apostles was the Messiahship of Jesus. It may be said most literally that they preached Christ. They declared that Jesus of Nazareth whom the Jews had rejected was in truth the long-looked-for Redeemer and King of Israel. But it has often been pointed out that the full Divinity of our Lord is not set forth in St. Peter's speeches. His words even assign a distinctly subordinate position to Christ. He says nothing of preexistence. The glory of Christ is subsequent to His earthly life; and it is received from the hands of God. Jesus is called "Lord," but in distinction from Jehovah (Acts ii. 34). The name "Son of God" is not given to Him by St. Peter *—although, according to the first Evangelist, the Apostle had used it in his great confession (Matt. xvi. 16). On the other hand, a new and favourite title is "the Servant" (ὁ παῖς) of God. This is used by St. Peter (Acts iii. 13, 26), and it is found in a prayer of the Jerusalem Church (iv. 27, 30). Still, our Lord is emphatically "*the* Servant," "the holy Servant," and "the Holy and Righteous One" (iii. 14). Anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, He went about doing good because God was with Him (x. 38). God has made Him both Lord and Christ (ii. 36), so that He is "Lord of all" (x. 36).

* In Acts viii. 37 (Authorised Version) the phrase is used by the Ethiopian eunuch, but this verse is wanting in the best authorities.

God has exalted Him to be "a Prince and a Saviour" (v. 31). When St. Peter says it was impossible that death should hold Him (ii. 24), the analogy of other passages leads us to think he is resting the assertion on the prophecy which he proceeds to quote (vers. 25–8), the promise of which cannot be broken; but, as Lechler says, "this does not exclude the fact that the victorious might and fulness of life, prophetically predicted of God's Anointed, was the internal ground of the promise as well as of its fulfilment."* St. Peter may well have known more than he chose to state in his first exposition of the gospel to the Jews. The famous confession at Cæsarea almost compels us to conclude that he did not reveal the deepest mysteries of his belief in his elementary missionary addresses. Still, the fact remains that these addresses are elementary and primitive in type, and leave room for further development in later expositions of Christian truth. The same reflections may apply to teachings concerning the death of Christ.

In preaching that Jesus was the Christ the Apostles were confronted by the obvious objection that He had not fulfilled the Messianic hopes of the Jews, but had apparently failed to make good His claims, and had come to an ignominious end. They dealt with this objection very thoroughly. Here lay their great task. Appealing to ancient Scripture on the one hand, and to the testimony of recent events on the other, they produced a reply which may be analysed into five pleas.

* *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times* (Eng. Trans.), vol. i., p. 273.

First, they corrected the idea of the Christ by means of that very literature on which the Jews professed to build their hopes. The customary reading of the Old Testament was too narrow. The Jewish imagination had dwelt almost exclusively on the picture of kingly glory. St. Peter called attention to the prediction of a "prophet" like Moses (Acts iii. 22), and in common with his fellow-disciples spoke of Jesus in His Messianic character as God's "Servant" (*e.g.*, iii. 13; iv. 27). These two forgotten titles, "prophet" and "servant," exactly fitted the great Teacher, who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

In the *second* place, the Apostles showed that the death of Christ had been predicted, so that it was not an unforeseen casualty; much less was it a fatal disaster, wrecking the scheme of His life-work: it had its place in that scheme (Acts ii. 23). According to the record in Acts the Apostles went no further in expounding the mystery of the Cross to their first Jerusalem audiences. Read in the light of the later teaching of St. Peter himself—not to mention St. Paul or St. John—this seems to be a most meagre explanation. There is not a word about any purpose in the death of Christ, any end to be achieved by that awful tragedy. It is not associated with atonement for sin, nor with the redemption of the world, as in other New Testament writings, although Christ Himself had more than once hinted at these profound consequences (Mark x. 45; xiv. 24). Still, imperfect as it is in this respect, the mission-preaching marks a distinct advance on the previous views of the Apostles, as well as a startling

contradiction to prevalent Jewish opinions. It is much to make it plain that the Saviour of the world must die, that the unexpected picture of a crucified Christ must henceforth take its place in the core of the gospel. Then the bare admission of the necessity of the death of Christ could not but rouse inquiries concerning the purpose of it. Why was this awful event necessary? St. Peter replies, Because it was predicted; he says the same of the resurrection. Subsequent thought, however, must needs push the inquiry further back. A fuller answer would be suggested by the allusions to Isa. liii., which were now resorted to, although at first the key to the enigma supplied by that famous prophecy was not laid hold of even by those who had insight enough to apply the idea of "The Servant of the Lord" to Jesus Christ.

The resurrection of our Lord supplied a *third* item in the reply of the Apostles to the objection of the Cross, and their most triumphant vindication of the claims of Christ. They place it in the front of their teaching, exulting over it with boundless delight. St. Peter argues that this also is predicted in Scripture (Acts ii. 25–8). But he does not now satisfy himself with the appeal to prophecy, as he did in the case of the crucifixion. He advances beyond this, and speaks of a fact known in experience. Herein lies the claim of the Apostles to preach Christ with boldness. They are witnesses of the resurrection. The foundation of their preaching is personal testimony. It is not their business to argue out a system of theology from given facts; much less do they dream of expounding abstract speculations. Their

task is to declare, in statements of which our gospels are specimens, what they have seen with their own eyes, first of the earthly life of Jesus, and then of His resurrection. This final event was a vindication of His claims, because it was a plain proof that, though men had rejected Him, God had owned and honoured Him. Hence the importance attached to the often-repeated statement that He had been *raised up by God.* The resurrection proved that the Jews were mistaken, that the Christians were right, that Jesus *was* the Messiah. It also showed that He was still living. The Apostles did not preach a dead Christ. But if He is living, He can manifest Himself again.

This reflection conducted the Apostles to a further point—their *fourth.* They vindicated the Messiahship of Christ by preaching His future advent. He would come again, and then He would exercise those offices of King and Judge which He had not put in force during His earthly ministry in the manner expected of Him. This topic and the consequences deduced from it lent to the preaching of the Apostles a striking resemblance to that of John the Baptist. In both cases there was a prediction of the coming of Christ; in both this coming was described as an occasion of supreme glory, but also one of severe judgment; in both the people were urged to repentance as a preparation for the great and terrible day of the Lord. But there were differences. John the Baptist, while preparing for the coming of One who had never yet appeared on earth, with the common lack of perspective which appertains to prophecy, did not distinguish between the times when the Messiah

would exercise His several functions. He knew of no first advent in humiliation to be followed by a second advent in glory. But the Apostles had seen the character of the first advent and the abrupt conclusion of the earthly life. They were thus prepared to declare that the glory and judgment must belong to a second coming of Christ. Then, having seen Jesus, they did not simply predict the coming of *a* Messiah, they foretold the return of *the* Christ whom they knew. Further, by thus knowing Him they were better prepared to describe the character of His reign. While following the Baptist in his announcement of judgment and chastisement, they were able to say more of the "times of refreshing" and the beneficent effects of the coming of Christ.

It has been said that the Apostles were mistaken in their expectation of the speedy return of Christ. We must remember that in their case as well as in that of John the Baptist prophecy lacks perspective, so that the Apostles would picture to themselves and to their hearers all that is implied in the advent of Christ in one scene. But that which was most pressing in its importance, the impending doom of the guilty nation and the coming of Christ to judge those who had rejected Him, was speedily realised in the destruction of Jerusalem. It is objected, further, that the Apostles still clung too closely to Jewish materialistic conceptions of the kingdom of God; that instead of perceiving the spiritual nature of that kingdom as conceived by Christ Himself, they still anticipated a visible splendour of dominion, which, as

it did not appear during the earthly life of our Lord, must come later—*i.e.*, that they did not change their conception of the Messianic hope, but only postponed the fulfilment of it. There may be some truth in this criticism. We know that the Apostles were entangled in these old Jewish notions but a few weeks before their first preaching recorded in Acts, and it is contrary to the analogy of spiritual development to suppose that they entirely escaped from them by one sudden leap into higher truth. Still, the endowment at Pentecost had already enlarged and elevated their ideas to a wonderful degree. Their preaching of the second advent was very different from the Messianic conceptions of current Jewish thought; it was more ethical, more spiritual. Christ would come to judge the nation, and to bring about a restoration of all things in a Divine order (Acts iii. 21).

Now, it may be asked, on what grounds did they base this expectation? It was not enough that the first advent had not accomplished all that was hoped from it. This was taken in conjunction with the fact that Jesus was proved to be the Christ by His resurrection. Therefore He must perform all the Messianic functions; and as some of these remained still in abeyance they must be exercised in the future. Then the resurrection pointed to this end more directly; for Jesus, having risen, was alive again, exalted to the right hand of God. Thus He was prepared to return.

Lastly, His gift of the Holy Spirit was a herald of His second advent. This is the *fifth* vindication of the Messiahship of Jesus. The wonderful Pentecostal advent of the Spirit is directly connected with the

exaltation of Christ. Being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, "He hath poured forth this which ye see and hear" (ii. 33). Thus the evident working of the Spirit among men is a proof of the heavenly activity of Christ, and of His lofty position in relation to His Father. It is also a sign of His second advent, because it is a preparation for "the day of the Lord." St. Peter argues this point by quoting a prophecy of Joel, which tells how in the last days God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, upon all classes, young and old, bond and free; so that it shall no longer be confined to prophets and official personages. Now that is just what happened at Pentecost, when the Spirit came upon the *whole* Church. Therefore St. Peter reasons these must be the last days, and the great day of the Lord must be near. He was right, as history proved. The old order of Judaism was doomed, and its overthrow soon followed; the new order of Christianity with the age of the Spirit was already dawning.

On the basis of this preaching of Christ the Apostles advanced to practical appeals. First, like John the Baptist, they called for repentance. The demand was more urgent than in the preaching of the forerunner, for a new sin had been added to the old tale of guilt, a sin so fearful that it almost obliterated the thought of all other sin. The Jews had denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted them; they had killed the Prince of life. The sin of sins was the wilful rejection of Christ. Yet even for those who had been guilty of this enormity there was

a gospel. This was in the very Christ whom the Jews had rejected. "In none other is there salvation" (Acts iv. 12). Salvation, then, is closely connected with the person of Jesus Christ. Repentance, forgiveness, the endowment of the Holy Ghost—these three gifts are all received through Christ. He brings about repentance, for He comes, as St. Peter says to the Jews, "to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities" (iii. 26); and He is exalted "to give repentance to Israel" (v. 31). This must mean that He leads those who submit to Him into a contrite, penitent state of mind. Then He grants forgiveness. Men are urged to repent and be baptised in the name of Christ for the remission of sins (ii. 38). Jesus is appointed to give remission of sins (v. 31). Therefore He is a "Saviour." He is also "the Prince of life," because He bestows the positive gift of life (iii. 15). But the new, special, most significant blessing received through Jesus Christ is the endowment of the Holy Spirit (ii. 38). Various secondary boons also accompany the gospel: thus the healing of a lame man is an illustration of the power for good that dwells in the name, *i.e.*, that springs from the authority, of our Lord (iii. 16).

The Apostle is careful to point out the conditions on which these boons are offered. The first is the action of the human will in repentance. While Christ gives repentance, men are exhorted to exercise the gift. They must still turn with an effort, although the power to do so comes from Christ. Another condition is expressed by the rite of baptism. Therefore St. Peter says, "Repent ye, and be baptised every

one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto remission of your sins" (ii. 38). Baptism would be familiar to all who knew of the work of John the Baptist. It would plainly signify the washing away of the old manner of life by an open act of renunciation of the past; its reference to the name of Christ would also suggest consecration to Him. The convert publicly and confessedly gave himself up to Christ by submitting to the rite. But that this external ordinance was not in itself an essential condition for the reception of Christ's highest gifts is proved by the fact that Cornelius and his friends were baptised with the Holy Ghost before they had been baptised with water. Faith is not so clearly expounded in these sermons among the conditions of salvation as it is in St. Paul's writings, where it stands alone, the one supreme requisite, the sole human condition of justification. But it is implied in the act of submission to baptism, and it is expressly named as the condition on which the lame man at the temple was healed (iii. 16).

II. THE EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES

It would be manifestly unreasonable to assume that St. James knew no more Christian truth than he set forth in his one brief letter, especially as his purpose in writing was to offer practical advice, not to expound a creed. Nevertheless, remembering how, whenever St. Paul and St. John had occasion to write with an equally practical aim in view, they could not refrain from alluding to some of those deeper ideas of which we have never a hint in

St. James, are we not bound to conclude that his whole conception of Christianity was more elementary and less speculative than that of the later New Testament writers? In one direction, however, the primitive nature of the Epistle contributes very materially to its value. St. James keeps remarkably close to the ethical teaching of our Lord; he gives us more echoes of the words of Jesus than can be traced through the whole range of the other New Testament epistles.

The teaching of St. James is all shaped and coloured by the fact that throughout he regards the Christian religion in the light of a perfected law. Here the question is raised, Does he mean the old Jewish law, or is he simply designating the sum of Christian principles under the title "law"? His quotation of definite commandments suggests the former view (*e.g.*, James ii. 10, 11); but his description of the law itself favours the latter. Thus he characterises it as a "perfect" law—apparently in distinction from another law, which can only be the Mosaic law, and yet which is imperfect; and then he calls it the law "of liberty" (i. 25)—a phrase which seems to indicate a law voluntarily accepted and obeyed from an internal desire, not merely under external compulsion, corresponding to Jeremiah's great thought of the law written on the heart, and implying the liberty which always accompanies the obedience that is prompted by love. St. James seems to be following our Lord's teaching of the fulfilment of law, a reference to which may reconcile the two views. He is not thinking of a law radically different from that of his fathers;

he is contemplating the old venerated Torah of Israel, carried up to perfection by Christ, so that its underlying principles are brought to light, fully developed, and realised in conduct. Attempts have been made to separate the ceremonial from the moral law in this relation. St. James does not indicate any such distinction. He never says that the ceremonial law has been superseded, and we have no reason to think that he did not keep it. But, then, on the other hand, it is a most significant fact that he never includes it in his admonitions, never even alludes to it. A Pharisee would have directed his most earnest exhortations to this point. Plainly, then, St. James is far from Pharisaism. He rather reminds us of the attitude of the prophets who preferred justice and mercy to ritual and sacrifice. With him, as with Christ, the true ritual of worship (*θρησκεία*) consists in deeds of kindness and the maintenance of purity (i. 27). Even though it is not formally abandoned, the law of ceremonies must fade away by degrees in the atmosphere of these more real and human interests.

In opposition to the observation of the perfect law of liberty stands the dreadful fact of sin, the genesis and history of which are briefly sketched by St. James. As to its parentage, he distinctly teaches that this cannot be traced back to God, who neither tempts nor is tempted (i. 13). Sin springs from the evil impulses of human nature. Every man is tempted by his own desires (*ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας*, vers. 14, 15). The seat of these desires is the bodily organism (iv. 1). How the desires come to be

there St. James does not say; so he leaves the dark question of the origin of evil unanswered, excepting negatively, in forbidding us to trace it to God. He makes no reference to the sin of Adam and its effect on the race. The thought of one's "own" desires leading to sin might suggest the notion of hereditary evil, or, at all events, it might lead us to suppose that evil is innate. But then St. James does not call the desires sins; on the contrary, he plainly implies that they are not in themselves sinful, because sin only appears at a later stage, as the child of desire—like the foul worm that is produced by an inoffensive insect. To account for this new thing we must admit another factor—the human will in which the desire breeds. St. James does not directly name the will, it is true; but his tone of admonition clearly assumes its existence. He is not a fatalist diagnosing the inevitable symptoms of evil regarded only as disease; he assumes the attitude of a moralist, warning his readers against the indulgence of selfish desires which lead to sin. In one place he mentions the devil as a provoker of sin. This would suggest that the desires previously noted may have been excited by the tempter. Still, the responsibility for actual sin cannot be shifted over to Satan, because he may be resisted, and when he is resisted he will flee (iv. 7). So here again the ultimate responsibility is to be traced back to the free action of man. Lastly, the world is referred to as a source of defilement (i. 27). We cannot attribute to St. James anything like a Manichæan horror of the physical universe. By "the

world" the early Christians meant human society in its alienation from God with its corrupt habits and fatal fascinations. They who are most deeply immersed in the affairs of this evil human world are most liable to its deadly snares. To St. James the rich appear to constitute a cruel, wicked section of society; while God's chosen people are to be found among the poor; and, in point of fact, the early Christians were for the most part persons of the humbler classes of society. This reminds us of the teaching of our Lord when He spoke of the impossibility of rich men being saved without a miracle (Mark x. 25). St. James has been called an Ebionite on account of these two characteristics of his teaching—his adhesion to the law, and his denunciation of the rich. The title is an anachronism; but the sect which in later times was known by it sprang from the Church party of which St. James had been the leader, and their teaching may be described as an exaggeration of his tendencies.

With St. James the final outcome of sin is death (James i. 15)—a dark and dreadful idea that recurs in all the New Testament writers.

Some critics have contended that St. James does not really advance beyond Judaism into true Christianity. Certainly he never mentions the "gospel," and yet he has an evangelic faith, although he does not make it his business to preach it in an epistle addressed to fellow-Christians, men and women already evangelised. Thus he teaches the forgiveness of sins (v. 15). The sinner can be converted from the error of his ways, his soul saved from death, and

his multitude of sins covered (ver. 20). The immediate application of this great truth is to the case of an unfaithful Christian, whom his brothers are exhorted to reclaim (ver. 19). But it is impossible to limit it to one particular class. Then with St. James, as with St. John, the Christian life begins in a new birth; but what is most peculiar to the earlier writer in this connection is that the origin of the new birth is attributed to the "word" of God (i. 18)—a thought which may be traced back to our Lord's teaching in the parable of the Sower, where the seed is "the word" (Mark iv. 14). According to St. James, the word is "implanted" (James i. 21)—an idea which again suggests Jeremiah's new covenant with the law written in the heart. Thus the word has become internal; it is comprehended and appropriated as an intimate principle of life. It has been implanted by God, who is the Originator of the new life. Some have asserted that this vital "word" is just the well-known old law.* But St. James does not say so, and he leaves us free to think that he agrees with the Apostles in treating the preaching of Christ as the method through which people are led into the kingdom. If we take this view, the "word" will be just the gospel message. St. James makes no reference to the death of Christ, or any objective condition of redemption. He simply connects the forgiveness of sins with prayer (v. 15).

The part of the Epistle which has attracted most discussion is that in which its author considers the mutual relationship of faith and works, and their

* *E.g.*, Beyschlag, vol. i., p. 346.

connection with justification. Although it was once regarded by many as a direct assault on St. Paul, a more careful criticism has rejected that verdict. But now, while admitting that St. James was not opposing St. Paul's doctrine, but only an antinomianism which the Apostle would certainly have repudiated, Pfleiderer has suggested that the Epistle was written in opposition to a Gnostic perversion of Paulinism, which the author himself mistook for the system of St. Paul *—a wild and needless conjecture! St. James does not speak lightly of faith. On the contrary, he honours it highly, emphatically designating the Christian religion "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" (ii. 1). He commends some who are poor in this world's goods, because they are "rich in faith" (ver. 5). He encourages the prayer of faith both at the beginning of his Epistle (i. 6) and near the close (v. 15). Great distress and trouble arise because men will not thus pray (iv. 2). Nevertheless, faith, standing alone, will not save a man. Works must go with faith in effecting the perfect result (ii. 22). No doubt this is not St. Paul's way of writing; but if St. James wrote before the Apostle, he could not be answering St. Paul's Epistles, and clearly he had quite other thoughts in his mind. There were pretentious, hollow characters in the Church, given to much talking, but negligent of their duty; and to condemn these people St. James denounces the faith that is without works, as well as the words that are without deeds (i. 23). It is plain that the faith he is here thinking of is the

* *Urchristenthum*, p. 874 ff.

bare intellectual belief, which was witnessed in the demons when the possessed trembled at the Divine name uttered by the exorcist (ii. 19)—a very different thing from the soul's grasp of God and Christ, which St. Paul understands by faith. "Can *that* faith save?" asks St. James (ver. 14). But he knows of the other faith that can save—the faith that is found together with works.

St. James is far from the Pharisees' doctrine of salvation by works. In the first place, with St. James works are not ceremonies of Jewish ritual, but deeds of Christian brotherhood. Then faith must be associated with these works to give them any efficacy. Lastly, St. James does not describe the two as though they were on a level—like a pair of horses running abreast to draw a chariot by their combined energy. They are vitally related. Faith without works is "dead in itself" (ii. 17); therefore we may conclude, conversely, faith with works is alive. So that when St. James tells us that faith without works is "barren" (ver. 20), we must not understand him to mean that works are the fertilising principle of faith—a confusing notion. Evidently his idea is that, since works are the fruit of a living, healthy faith, their absence is a proof that the faith must be ineffectual. The works are important as tests of the vitality and vigour of the faith. Thus he writes, "I by my works will *show* thee my faith" (ver. 18). The works really glorify the true, living faith from which they spring, while at the same time they distinguish it from a bare belief in dogmas, which is totally different.

With this idea of faith before us we can understand

St. James's doctrine of justification. He has a different phase of justification before him from that which occupies the attention of St. Paul. The Epistle to the Romans discusses the justification of the sinner; our Epistle is concerned with the justification of the righteous man. St. Paul's justification emerges at the beginning of the Christian life; St. James's is concerned with the end—just as with St. James salvation is regarded as a future deliverance (iv. 12). St. Paul is most anxious to show how a sinful man can be put right with God. Although not in formal expression, in heart and belief St. James is essentially at one with him with regard to this great first step; for he teaches the free forgiveness of God and the doctrine of Divine grace (i. 17; v. 15), only he does not regard these things forensically as involved in a legal justification. But in his discussion of justification St. James has in view the case of Christian people and their judgment by Christ after death or at the second advent, when their faith can only be vindicated by their life. The bald profession of piety, the glib use of unctuous phrases, or the purely intellectual hold of a correct creed, will be of no avail before the judgment-seat of Christ. The only justification for a Christian confession is Christian conduct. The justification of good people which is here discussed is a familiar idea in the Old Testament; and therefore the use of the term "justification" by one who lived so much in the atmosphere of the ancient Scriptures as St. James is quite natural, without any reference to that totally different phase of justification which at a later time came to be expounded by St. Paul.

Although his Epistle is full of the spirit and teaching of Christ, St. James only mentions our Lord distinctly in two places, or at most in three (i. 1; ii. 1; and perhaps v. 15). He says nothing of the pre-existence; but we can base no argument on mere silence regarding a topic for the introduction of which there was no immediate occasion. Jesus is "Christ"—the Messiah; the title has become part of His name. He is "our Lord," and St. James is His "bondservant" (δοῦλος). This is the more striking if the writer is the brother of Jesus; he is too humble even to name the close relationship. Then he calls Jesus "the Lord of Glory," a title which cannot but suggest the idea of the Divinity of Christ, especially when we contrast it with the very different style in which so great a prophet as Elijah is significantly designated as "a man of like passions with us" (v. 17). Evidently to the writer Jesus Christ stands in a unique and immeasurably higher position. Moreover, St. James uses the Old Testament title "the Lord" in such a way that he appears to mean by it both "Jesus Christ" and "God" in the same connection. Thus a sick man is to be anointed "in the name of the Lord," and "the Lord" shall raise him up (vers. 14, 15). Now we know that Christian cures were wrought in the name of Christ (*e.g.*, Acts iv. 10), and therefore the reference must be to His name. But just before this we read of prophets who spake "in the name of the Lord" (James v. 10); of "the end of the Lord"—*i.e.*, the end God brought to Job's tragedy; and "how the Lord is full of pity, and merciful" (ver. 11); in all of which cases the

reference is plainly to Jehovah. A person who did not accept the Divinity of Christ, even if he were a careless, inaccurate writer, would certainly shrink from confusion on such a vital point as this; and St. James's words cannot be accounted for except by the explanation that he did indeed believe in the Divinity of our Lord.

Finally, it is to be noted that St. James flashes out occasional brilliant thoughts on the character and glory of God, whom he names poetically "Father of Lights" (i. 17), apparently as the Maker and Preserver of the heavenly bodies. God is more glorious than these His works, more constant than the calm, orderly heavens; for in Him is "no variableness"—like that of the changeable moon and even the sun, which is subject to eclipse—and "no shadow caused by turning," like that which falls on the earth when by the revolution of the heavens, as it seems, the sun sinks beneath the horizon. While the glorious changelessness of God is thus accentuated, His Fatherhood is also prominent throughout the Epistle. Here again, as with his ethics, St. James follows the teaching of Christ. The Supreme is "our God and Father" (i. 27), "the Lord and Father" (iii. 9). The Third Person of the Trinity is not named in the Epistle; but the mention of heavenly gifts, such as wisdom from above (i. 5) and the implanted word (ver. 21), suggests the exercise of precisely the same Divine influence as that which is elsewhere expressly ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

III. LATER PETRINE THEOLOGY

1 PETER

The First Epistle of St. Peter represents a decidedly more advanced stage of Christian thought than that indicated by the Apostle's speeches recorded in Acts. It is evidently one of the later books of the New Testament, because it has many allusions to passages in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and possibly some to the Epistle to the Ephesians, etc.* But Reuss, who maintains this view, has nevertheless shown clearly that St. Peter's Epistle does not contain the distinctive characteristics of Pauline theology. There is no reference to the great antithesis of law and gospel. Righteousness "is treated from the ordinary Old Testament point of view, not in St. Paul's peculiar identification of it with justification." Faith does not appear as the ground of justification; the object of it is the hope of future salvation; in fact, hope almost takes the place of faith. The frequent and pathetic references to the Passion show a marked advance of thought beyond the speeches; but while the Atonement is now ascribed to our Lord's suffering and death, St. Paul's special idea of the mystical union of the Christian with Christ in

* See Marcus Dods, *Introd.*, p. 201. The reference to St. Paul was pointed out by Michaelis. It is maintained by Reuss, Pfleiderer, Holtzmann, Beyschlag, etc. On the other hand, Weiss holds that St. Paul quotes 1 Peter! Davidson gives a list of the similar passages in parallel columns (*Introd.*, vol. ii., p. 414).

death and resurrection finds no place here; the subject is treated more objectively, and the relation of Christian conduct to it is found in direct, conscious imitation. These facts indicate a more primitive type of theology; they prove that, though St. Peter has not refrained from using the writings of his great contemporary, he has retained his own individuality. It is remarkable that the quotations are almost confined to practical directions. St. Peter makes use of St. Paul's ethical teaching; in theology he still belongs to the earlier school. Moreover, while he quotes from St. Paul, he also quotes from St. James.* Still, there is a real progress of thought, which is much in advance of that in the Epistle of St. James. The thought approaches St. Paul; but it also approaches St. John. In fact, it flows in the course of the broadening and deepening current of New Testament theology.

It has often been pointed out that the doctrinal peculiarity of Petrine theology is its treatment of Christianity as a fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. This marked trait of the speeches reappears in our Epistle. But the history has moved on, the circumstances are altered, and therefore the prophecies now referred to are of another order. Writing to Christians, to men and women who all believe in Christ, and who are grouped together in a new society, the Apostle has no longer any occasion to demonstrate the Messiahship of Jesus; but now he has to show that the promised blessings of the glorious Messianic age will be enjoyed by Christians. Thus

* See Marcus Dods, *Introd.*, p. 201.

we have more to do with Old Testament utterances concerning the people of God and their privileges. In the speeches St. Peter proved that Jesus was the Messiah in spite of His crucifixion; here he argues that Christians are the true people of God in spite of their persecutions. Thus he endeavours to fortify his readers by reminding them of their high privileges as "an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (ii. 9). Accordingly, while the speeches—dealing more with the vindication of the personal claims of Christ—anticipated His second advent, the Epistle points forward to the incorruptible inheritance of Christians (i. 4), and cheers the martyrs and confessors with a "living hope" (ver. 3). The chosen people now include Gentiles as well as Jews; for in times past the readers of the Epistle "were no people," "but now" they "are the people of God" (ii. 10). There is no indication of any special privilege for Jews; on the contrary, all the promised blessings are for Christians generally, with no thought of racial distinction. They who are thus privileged were "called" by God (i. 15), they are His "elect" (i. 1); but their election was not arbitrary, it was "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (ver. 2).*

The way in which men become the privileged people of God is described rather after the manner of St. James, and in anticipation of St. John's teaching, than according to St. Paul's way of representing it. The privilege is not to be inherited by any chosen race, as the Jews had imagined. The means of acquiring it is

* Compare Rom. viii. 29.

a new birth, which is effected by God, "who according to His great mercy begat us again" (i. 3). So Christians are "begotten again" (ver. 23), and have become "new-born babes" (ii. 2). St. Peter may have heard of the discourse with Nicodemus; his allusion to new-born babes also suggests a reminiscence of our Lord's impressive lesson from the little child whom He set in the midst of His disciples (Mark ix. 36, 37).

From another point of view St. Peter describes the process by which Christians pass out of their old state into the new privileges as a "redemption" (1 Peter i. 18). This points back to the earlier condition, while the idea of new birth looks forward to the Christian status. The bondage from which men are redeemed is the original life of sin—"your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers" (*ibid.*). St. Peter plainly teaches that apart from Christ men live in sin. This wickedness must be put away (ii. 1), on their side, by their own effort of will, though in the strength of the new birth. Christians are like sheep formerly astray which have returned to their shepherd (ver. 25). Sin is considered especially to consist in "fleshly lusts which war against the soul" (ver. 11), in regard to which Christians are to remember that as God's chosen people they are pilgrims and sojourners, and that therefore they must not entangle themselves in the vices which are indulged in by those who do not pretend to be other than citizens of the earth. Still, mental sins are also noted—guile, hypocrisies, envies, etc. (ver. 1).

Like St. James, St. Peter sees the source of the new life in "the word of God" (i. 23). The Apostle

defines this as "good tidings which was preached unto you" (i. 25). Thus the new life is brought about through the reception of the gospel. It originates in truth. St. Peter also speaks of our being begotten again "unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (ver. 3). This life, then, springs directly out of our Lord's resurrection—an idea which is expressed by St. Paul when he speaks of our being raised with Christ (*e.g.*, Col. iii. 1). Therefore the word which regenerates must be the gospel which tells of the risen Christ.

Further, this regenerating word "liveth and abideth"; it is an "incorruptible" seed (1 Peter i. 23), just as the inheritance is "incorruptible" (ver. 4—like Christ's incorruptible treasures in heaven, Matt. vi. 20), and the blood of Christ which redeems us is "incorruptible" (1 Peter i. 18). Thus we may learn that the new life has lasting energy—in accordance with what we read elsewhere in the New Testament of "*eternal* life." Still, the life must be continually nourished; and the source of its nourishment, like the first seed of its being, is truth—"the spiritual milk which is without guile" (ii. 2).

The new life which is thus enjoyed by Christians depends entirely on the goodness of God. It is He who begat us, and He did so of "His great mercy" (i. 3). Christians have "obtained mercy" (ii. 10). The continuance of the Christian life depends on the grace of God, but He "giveth grace to the humble" (v. 5). We are to stand fast in the true grace of God (ver. 12). There are various Divine gifts, and Christians are "stewards of the manifold grace of

God" (iv. 10). There is yet more future favour to be looked for. We read of a "grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (i. 13), and of Christians being "heirs of the grace of life" (iii. 7). St. Peter does not say one word about salvation through the works of the law: he attributes the beginning, the course, and the completion of the Christian life to the favour and goodness of God. It is appropriated by the individual in his *baptism*, as Noah was saved in the flood—*i.e.*, in both cases the water marks the crisis, though St. Peter is careful to note that the really important thing is not physical ablution, but "the interrogation of a good conscience towards God" (ver. 21).

St. Peter accentuates the idea of the Fatherhood of God. He is "the Father" (i. 2); we are to address Him in prayer pointedly "as Father" (ver. 17); and to commit our souls to Him in well doing as "unto a faithful Creator" (iv. 19). Unlike St. James, St. Peter has several allusions to the Holy Spirit. He is "the Spirit of glory" (ver. 14); He is "sent forth from heaven" (i. 12); He "resteth upon" Christians —a phrase that reminds us of the Spirit like a dove that "abode" upon Christ (John i. 32); He is the source of sanctification (1 Peter i. 2). St. Peter once associates the three—the Father, the Spirit, and Jesus Christ (*ibid.*). The arrangement is unusual, but it has no doctrinal significance; the Apostle is thinking of the order of Christian experience, and accordingly he places the sanctification by the Spirit before the obedience offered to Jesus Christ as Lord which depends on it. He does not say that the Holy Spirit

is sent by Christ, but he unites the Spirit with Christ in a manner that is peculiar to himself when he calls the Spirit that moved in the prophets "the Spirit of Christ" (i. 11).

Jesus is not only designated *the* Christ. As with St. James, the title "Christ" is now a proper name for our Lord. He is even called simply "Christ"—quite a favourite expression with St. Peter (*e.g.*, iii. 15, 16, 18, etc.). Jesus Christ was a real man, who suffered and was put to death in the flesh. But in His spirit He was quickened (ver. 18); and the statement of this fact hints at some peculiar greatness residing in His spiritual nature. Although He is not called "the Son of God" in so many words, God is distinctly described as "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," which expresses the same truth, and the more pointedly inasmuch as the general Fatherhood of God is prominent in the Epistle. God's fatherly relation to Christ is of another order, and quite unique. In ii. 3 an Old Testament reference to Jehovah as the Lord is applied to Jesus Christ. Much controversy has been excited by a curious phrase alluded to above—"the Spirit of Christ" (i. 11), used as a title for the Spirit which inspired the ancient Hebrew prophets. Weiss and Beyschlag understand this to be the Spirit which afterwards rested on our Lord, and dwelt with Him during His earthly life; but it is more generally held that the personal Spirit of Christ is referred to, and therefore that the passage teaches His pre-existence. Weiss argues that it would be incongruous for the historical Christ to be named in the same passage as the

pre-existent Spirit of Christ—the "Spirit of Christ" testifying to the "sufferings of Christ"; but Lechler replies that if Χριστός both times denotes the personal Christ, first before and then after His historical appearance, the name is not applied to different subjects. Then it is to be noted that Christ is said to have preached to the spirits in prison by His Spirit, which must be His personal Spirit; for in this He is said to be quickened after having been put to death in the flesh. Thus it seems to be in harmony with other phrases in the Epistle to read the disputed expression as a statement that it was really the Divine person of Christ Himself, previous to the incarnation, that inspired the prophets. The pre-existence of our Lord seems also hinted at in the statement that Christ, who was foreknown before the foundation of the world, was *manifested* also at the end of the times (ver. 20).

The most remarkable indication of progress of thought in St. Peter's teaching is seen in his treatment of the sufferings of our Lord. In the speeches he had shown that these sufferings had been predicted and had taken place within the Divine plan.* But he had gone no further; he had not offered any explanation of the plan, nor had he said that any good results were brought about by what our Lord endured. Still, the very fact that the sufferings of Christ were designed might have suggested that they must have served some purpose, although that purpose was not as yet discernible. Then the favourite reference to Isaiah liii. to justify faith in a suffering Messiah

* See p. 123.

might have furnished the key to the mystery. Very possibly it did so later on. At all events, in his epistle St. Peter distinctly teaches that there was a purpose in the sufferings of Christ, and that this purpose was the redemption of men from sin.

In this connection he writes of the death of Christ (iii. 18) and His blood (i. 19), laying peculiar stress on His sufferings. We have here a very touching trait of the mind of the disciple, who, having witnessed those sufferings and the gentleness and strength with which they had been borne, could never efface from his memory the sublime and awful picture of his Lord's passion. Thus, while St. Paul—who probably had not been present at the crucifixion—simply connects our redemption with the death of Christ, St. Peter is constrained to associate it more with the previous sufferings and our Lord's wonderful endurance of them. His passion was definitely for our benefit, and that in a peculiar way. He was a righteous One suffering on behalf of the unrighteous, and for their good (iii. 18). Moreover, the death of Christ was sacrificial; He is compared to a lamb without blemish and without spot (i. 19; see Isa. liii. 7). He bare our sins in His body upon the wood (1 Peter ii. 24). Here the cross takes the place of an altar, while Christ is evidently considered to be a Sin-offering on which the sins of men have been laid. Thus it is possible for His precious blood to redeem us (i. 19). The very reference to the "blood" shows that the redemption is sacrificial—*i.e.*, that we are redeemed as by a sacrifice, just as under the law forfeited lives were redeemed by

sacrifices, the application of which was made by sprinkling blood.

The direct result of this redemption is that its subjects are freed from their old sinful habits (i. 18), and are "healed" (ii. 24). The purpose of Christ's death was that He might bring us to God (iii. 10), and that we might "live unto righteousness" (ii. 24). Thus the deliverance is not so much from punishment as from sin itself; this agrees with the notion of salvation as regeneration rather than as justification. There is nothing contradictory to the more Pauline ideas here, but they are not brought forward by St. Peter. In reflecting on this great subject, he uses it as a motive. We are to die to our sins (*ibid.*), and live unto righteousness under the influence of the Cross of Christ. Then our Lord's courageous and patient suffering is an example for the persecuted. The lesson is the more impressive because the suffering was on our behalf. "Christ also suffered *for you*, leaving you an example, that ye should follow His steps" (ii. 21).

In one famous passage St. Peter refers to a saving mission of Christ to the world of the dead. After His death He went in spirit to preach to the spirits in prison (iii. 19, 20). The contemporaries of Noah are mentioned as most ancient and proverbially wicked men, who were lost when the patriarch was saved. They are called "spirits," because the truly *dead*, those who have not the life of God in them, are nowhere described in the Bible as enjoying their full resurrection life after death, and certainly as yet they could have enjoyed no resurrection. They are in

prison for their sin—*i.e.*, in the place of punishment. Yet even to them Christ *preached.* He can have preached nothing but a gospel, and that He did so is plainly shown a little later, where we read, "The gospel was preached even to the dead" (iv. 6). This mysterious episode must have been very brief, for Christ was duly raised from the dead (i. 3), and then He passed into the heavens, there to exercise exalted powers of government (iii. 22).

2 PETER AND JUDE

Inasmuch as the authorship of 2 Peter is seriously controverted, it would not be wise to appeal to its authority for theological guidance concerning any matters in which it did not echo what was taught elsewhere on a less questionable apostolic basis. Evidently the writer largely quotes the little Epistle of St. Jude, and the two Epistles should be read together. As a matter of fact, there is no important theological idea in either of them which may not be found in other parts of the New Testament. They both bear witness to the rise of error in the Church, and they both associate this error with loose morals, so that in warning their readers against apostasy their drift is practical. Neither of them is moulded to any serious degree on distinctly Pauline or Johannine ideas; and although these Epistles give evidence of having been written later than most of the New Testament, and contain echoes of St. Paul, on the whole they reflect the primitive type of thought which we associate with St. James and St. Peter. Great

weight is attached to prophecy as a guide (2 Peter i. 19; iii. 2), because it is inspired by the Holy Ghost, and is not an arbitrary invention of man's (i. 21). Jesus is Christ and Lord (ver. 2), and He is distinctively known as "Saviour" (*e.g.*, ver. 11; ii. 20; iii. 2). He is God's beloved Son, attested by a Voice from heaven (i. 17). Although the doctrine of the Cross is not directly stated, it is plainly held, in the later Petrine sense, as a principle of redemption, because the apostates are accused of "denying even the Master that bought them" (ii. 1). The Christian life depends on grace (iii. 18). There seems to be one allusion to the God-given righteousness enjoyed by faith—reminding us of St. Paul (i. 1); but the importance of right knowledge is more insisted on (*e.g.*, i. 2, 5). This knowledge is best when it is attained by the experience of the interior life (ver. 19). Sin is a bondage in the guise of liberty (ii. 19). The punishment of sin is destruction (vers. 1, 3, 12). The "day of the Lord" will bring a great judgment and overthrow of the old order, which will be followed by a glorious future—"new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (iii. 13).

THE PAULINE TYPE

I. THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ST. PAUL'S THEOLOGY

St. Paul is the great theologian of the New Testament. His inspired ideas have shaped the thought of Christendom. In examining his teaching

we have to inquire whether this stupendous result was effected on the lines of a normal evolution of the truth involved in the previous work of Christ; or whether, as some have supposed, it was of a new and foreign nature, in which case the Christianity which conquered the Roman world cannot be called the doctrine of Jesus. The answer to this inquiry will not be discovered by the simple process of setting the Sermon on the Mount side by side, say, with the Epistle to the Romans, and noting the agreements or divergences between them. Three guiding thoughts must be borne in mind. First, Christianity consists at least as much in the facts of the character, the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as in His verbal utterances; and therefore a theology which endeavours to be complete must aim at discovering the meaning of those facts. This is not attempted in the Gospels, which simply narrate the facts, while Paulinism explains them, and traces their influence on the world. Thus it is necessarily new in its expression of thought; and yet if it is a correct explanation of the facts, it is in vital relation to the previous work of Christ, and must be in harmony with it. Second, there was an evident advance in doctrine corresponding to the historical progress of events. Not only had the course of the life of Christ been completed—which was not the case during the times covered by the Gospel narratives—but wonderful, quite unexpected occurrences in the mission-field and in the life of the Churches had furnished new materials for reflection. The victory of Christianity in heathen lands had opened the eyes of the less

prejudiced to a wider view of its range; and its spiritual fruits in experience had enabled some to see deeper into its nature. St. Paul was the leader in this progress of knowledge. Third, since every mind brings to the contemplation of the problems it has to face its native powers and its previous acquirements, and since St. Paul's was a mind of superb genius, which had received specific intellectual training, and—a far more significant fact—which had been through the school of a rare spiritual experience, can we be astonished at the discovery that his own rich endowments had affected his conception of Christianity? Above all, St. Paul laid claim to a specific apostolic mission, with a gospel received not from man, but direct from Christ, and a full share in the new gifts of the Spirit. If a great outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Church, with a more specific illumination for the Apostles, is to be accepted as a central fact in the history of these times, it is simply unreasonable to expect that so potent an influence should not have left its stamp in a most marked degree on such a man as the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

Therefore we must be prepared to meet with novelty of thought. Yet this need not involve any contradiction of what preceded; it may be a genuine, consistent evolution of the fruits of Christian truth in perfect agreement with the specific nature of the seeds sown by Jesus Christ, the essential thing being that the vital germ comes from Christ, while later facts and experiences, and extraneous knowledge and thought, only furnish it with nourishing diet and the

discipline of culture. Whether this is the case or not we must discover by a careful examination of St. Paul's teaching.

The Apostle only alludes to his early experiences as though they constituted a dark background against which the life and thought that followed his conversion stood out in clear, sharp contrast; and yet this contrast was not absolute, for long after the change, which he felt to be so great that he reckoned himself a new man, many items of knowledge and many methods of reasoning, carried over from his previous condition, stood him in stead as an armoury of weapons for his Christian warfare. His training was exceptional to a degree. A Hellenist by birth, he was a Pharisee by education. Critics attempt to trace the two factors that thus entered into the making of him through his subsequent career, but in different proportions, according to the estimate they form of his teaching. Thus Pfleiderer co-ordinates them, and while admitting the Pharisaism to be an important element, lays greater stress on the Hellenism. He does not hold, indeed, that St. Paul studied Greek philosophy at first hand; but he maintains that in an indirect way the Apostle was largely influenced by it, especially in so far as it was reflected in Alexandrian Hellenistic Judaism, and he gives to the Book of Wisdom a prominent place among the sources of Pauline theology.* On the other hand, Sabatier will allow very little to the influence of Hellenism, and regards the Pharisaism of Saul of Tarsus as the one main preliminary to the life and thought derived from

* *Urchristenthum*, p. 31.

Christian experience.* Certainly we have no historical evidence of his Hellenistic training. He was probably taken to Jerusalem when quite a boy; there he was brought up in the strictest form of rabbinical scholarship. He himself confesses to his intense Judaism, to his fierce Pharisaism (Gal. i. 13, 14). His writings reveal the fact that he was quite at home with his Hebrew Bible, from which, when necessary, he would correct the Septuagint Version. They also bear witness to his familiarity with rabbinical modes of thought. The allegorical treatment of Scripture which we attribute especially to Alexandrian Judaism, but which was also in practice at Jerusalem, was handled in a thoroughly Jewish way by St. Paul (iv. 21–31). A deeper characteristic is to be discovered in the dialectical course of his thought. St. Paul does not merely exhort and expostulate in the practical style of St. James; nor does he only define and utter pregnant aphorisms after the manner of St. John. He reasons, he meets his antagonist as a trained logician; but with rabbinical, not Aristotelian or Platonic processes. Still more vital to his system is his legal position. Even when rejecting the law he treats it from a lawyer's point of view. His whole attitude to the question of justification is forensic; he has the proceedings of the Sanhedrim in mind when he regards the salvation of a soul in the light of the acquittal of a prisoner. Then there is no evidence that he was acquainted with Greek culture. The two or three quotations † from classical literature, which

* *The Apostle Paul* (Eng. Trans.), pp. 45–56. So also Beyschlag, Stevens, etc.

† Acts xvii. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 33; Titus i. 12.

are all that the most diligent search has been able to find, might have been picked up second-hand in the course of conversation, or from casual reading. In fact, St. Paul is a thorough Jew by education, as well as by birth. Still, his divergence from the older Apostles is chiefly seen in his more liberal treatment of Gentiles and in his absolute rejection of the law as a means of salvation. The former course of conduct may have been due in some measure to his Hellenistic connections, because, although he was brought up at Jerusalem, naturally he would have maintained some connection with his kinsmen in Cilicia; so that from the first his outlook would have been wider than that of the Galilean Apostles. The latter—the rejection of the law—was no doubt partly a conclusion drawn from his own experience in the failure of Pharisaism to satisfy his conscience, contrasted with the triumphant deliverance he had received through the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and partly a deduction from his observation of the unfettered influence of the Holy Spirit in bringing forth the fruits of Christianity as freely among uncircumcised Gentiles as among law-abiding Jews.

Scholars of the most opposite schools—Pfleiderer, Lechler, Sabatier, Beyschlag, etc.—have concurred in the opinion that St. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus was the starting-point of his most characteristic Christian thought. No doubt, as Weiss remarks, "it is wrong to think of the Apostle Paul as from the first having no connection with the primitive Christian tradition." * It is not unlikely

* *Biblical Theology, etc.*, vol. i., p. 279.

that he had been one of the Cilicians with whom St. Stephen disputed (Acts vi. 9), and it is just possible that he had seen Jesus in the flesh (2 Cor. v. 16). The goads against which it was "hard to kick" may have been no more than the pressing facts of the providential history of the Church which the persecutor was vainly striving to oppose; but it is not reasonable to deny that they may also have consisted in the urgent thoughts that sprang from his previous knowledge of Christianity. The restless vehemence of his headlong course suggests that he was haunted by a suspicion of the insecurity of his whole contention. While witnessing the sublime spectacle of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, so real a man as Saul could scarcely have escaped the question whether after all the faith that inspired such heroism did not rest on a better foundation than the reckless blasphemy which was its basis according to the theory of the prosecution. The vision on the road to Damascus may have been the Divine answer to this searching question. Therein the startled man suddenly learned by his own experience that the maligned Head of the persecuted sect was alive in heavenly majesty. The result of this amazing revelation was a violent revolution of thought and life in its recipient, who saw as by a flash of lightning that his old position was hideously wrong, and that of the victims of Jewish bigotry absolutely right, for Jesus was indeed the Christ of God! But the wonderful experience carried him further. Not only was it now evident that he must abandon his old prejudices and accept what hitherto had been to him, as it continued to be to his

compatriots, an absurd paradox—the idea of a Messiah who had suffered a felon's death (1 Cor. i. 23); but the very fact that God had condescended to make such a revelation to so obstinate a persecutor of the Christians overwhelmed him with a feeling of the Divine goodness set over against his own unworthiness. Here was a stupendous act of grace, the effect of which was to crush at one blow and for ever all the Pharisaism of its object. Thus was he brought to recognise not only that the righteousness of the law after which he had been striving in vain was practically unattainable,—this he had learnt long since, to his perplexity and despair (see Rom. vii. 22–4),—but that it was not what God required; for had there not come to him in his sin, quite apart from the law, a rich revelation of God's Son, all unmerited on his part, simply sent by the supreme love of God? In this overwhelming experience of grace we may detect the genesis of St. Paul's great fundamental doctrine of grace.

The subsequent teaching of St. Paul is largely based upon his own experience. We may discover in it two distinct courses of thought. First, there is the logical and more external presentation of Christianity. Naturally this is most prominent in controversy, where we see St. Paul arguing like a rabbi, although he is opposing the rabbinical tradition. In this region he regards Christian truth in its relation to law. Here his analogies and illustrations are drawn from the courts, and his keen, strong argumentation is that of the lawyer. Second, behind the logic, furnishing the very axioms of his theology,

and repeatedly coming to the foreground as the self-evident data of all his teaching, is his own spiritual experience. We may call this his mysticism. Scholasticism, both Catholic and Protestant, has had more sympathy for the first than for the second element of St. Paul's theology; and since most theologians prove to be possessed of scholastic sympathies, great injustice has been done to the richest contents of the religious thought of St. Paul. But when we pass beyond the outworks of dialectics to this inner citadel, we reach what is the true secret of Paulinism. This is not the universalism of Christianity seen with Hellenic breadth of vision in opposition to the clannishness of Judaism; nor is it even the doctrine of righteousness by grace through faith in opposition to righteousness by law and works, though both of these great conceptions are characteristically Pauline: it is the spiritual truth, tested in experience, that salvation is received and perfected by the union of the soul with Jesus Christ—crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, risen with Christ, ascending with Christ. Thus Christ Himself is the very heart of St. Paul's religion. The early apostolic preaching also centres in Christ; but it treats Him more externally—in relation to His preordained suffering, His resurrection triumph, and His future advent in glory. St. James echoes the very words of Jesus; but he represents the spirit of the ethical Teacher, of the Preacher of the Sermon on the Mount. St. Peter comes nearer to deeper truths, and dwells much on the sufferings of Christ for the benefit of His people, urging Christians to walk in His footsteps. But it

is St. Paul who brings out most clearly and forcibly the great fact of the close connection of the Christian with the risen, living Christ. This is one reason why the resurrection takes a regal place in his theology. It not only demonstrates that Jesus is the Christ; it also shows that our Lord now lives, and lives to be the life of His Church. Thus St. Paul sums up his conception of Christianity in his own experience when he says, "To me to live is Christ."

A careful inquiry brings out the fact that St. Paul's teaching was progressive, and so leads to the conclusion that his own inspired thinking passed through stages of development. Many writers, none more skilfully than Professor Sabatier, have traced these stages in correspondence with the changes in the experience of the Apostle. They naturally fall into three periods:—

First, there is the period of early missionary activity previous to the breaking out of the great controversy with the Judaisers, which is represented by St. Paul's speeches in Acts and the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. It is characterised by plain declarations of elementary truths and the absence of subtle argumentation. The Apostle announces to Jews that Jesus is their Messiah (Acts xiii. 23), and to heathen that God has appointed a Man to be the Judge of all (xvii. 31). To both he asserts that the resurrection of Jesus is the confirmation of these claims. To both he offers salvation in Christ. The return of the risen Saviour for judgment is strongly insisted on. When this will be no one can tell; but the Apostle evidently shared the belief of his contemporaries in the near

approach of the Parousia. Indeed, he expected it to be before his own death (1 Thess. iv. 15). We need not be surprised at this, for had not even our Lord confessed to His ignorance of the time of His own return? If we may believe that Christ did come in judgment at the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostle was not far out in his anticipation. Basing their exhortation on the approaching doom, these missionary speeches urge men to repent, and promise forgiveness to those who will accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

The second period is that of the controversy with Judaising Christians. It is represented by the principal group of Epistles—those addressed to the Corinthians, the Galatians, and the Romans, and containing the most complete exposition of St. Paul's theology. The opposition of the method of the gospel to that of the law is now clearly drawn out; God's supreme act of love in sending His Son to redeem the world fully expounded; the achievement of salvation through the death of Christ as a reconciling sacrifice strongly insisted on; and, finally, the appropriation of the grace of God shown to take place by means of faith. These, however, are all truths difficult of apprehension, and in writing to the Corinthians St. Paul plainly states that they cannot be understood until they are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. ii. 13–15). The Spirit of God is the fountain of interior illumination, from which also Christians derive all other gifts and graces that constitute the phenomenon of the new life.

The third period embraces the Epistles of the

Captivity, written in a calmer mood, after the great controversy is over—that to the Philippians, revealing the Apostle's deepest perception of his personal relation to his Lord; that to the Ephesians, developing the idea of the mystical union of Christ and the Church; and that to the Colossians, advancing to an exalted view of the nature of Christ and His supremacy over the universe never before attained. Lastly, it may be noted that the Pastoral Epistles manifest development in Church government rather than in theology.

II. SIN

St. Paul's conception of redemption in Jesus Christ presupposes the prevalence of the dreadful evil from which deliverance is needed. Therefore, in order to comprehend his exposition of the gospel, we must first see what he teaches concerning the nature and reign of sin. This order of procedure agrees with his own method in the Epistle to the Romans, which opens with a demonstration of the world's spiritual ruin, and that in turn is based on the order of his personal experience. The line of thought is bitten deeply into the argument by the force of the Apostle's earlier spiritual history. As a Pharisee he must have recognised that the aim of his distinctive position was to pursue a righteous life in separation from the evil of the world; but his vivid reminiscences of his desperate struggle for purity (recorded in Rom. vii.) show that he had been keenly conscious of the masterful dominion of sin long before he had seen Christ's secret

of victory. In that early period he had striven to conquer his indwelling sin by detailed acts of obedience to the Jewish law, but in vain, so that a miserable sense of failure had intensified his perception of the overwhelming magnitude of the evil he was contending against. Thus, although he had always aimed at goodness and had never fallen into abandoned profligacy, St. Paul, like St. Augustine and John Bunyan, was brought to look at Christ from the standpoint of sin. This autobiographical fact lends weight to the Apostle's gloomy representation of the condition of the Christless world.

St. Paul insists on the universal dominion of sin over both Gentiles and Jews. His argument is twofold—empirical and Scriptural. He appeals to his readers' knowledge of the world—such a world as was gathered in that sink of iniquity, the Rome of the Cæsars, to which his letter was going! and he confirms his appeal by adding quotations from denunciatory psalms. It might be objected that all men were not guilty of the heinous vices which the Apostle groups together in his awful catalogue, and also that the language of ancient Hebrew poets could not be fairly adduced as evidence against the character of society at large in subsequent ages. But it should be remembered that the moral atmosphere in which such hideous monstrosities of immorality, as the Roman satyrists plainly show were existing at this time, could lift up their heads unabashed, must have been very foul; and, further, it should be observed that the Apostle is not so much concerned with individual characters as with mankind as a whole. The language

of the psalmists is a revelation of the awful depths to which human nature has sunk. Therefore, while it is not literally true of all men that "the poison of asps is under their lips," or that "their feet are swift to shed blood," the fact that such things can be said of any is a sign of the degraded condition into which mankind has fallen. Other pleas which might be brought forward in defence of the accused world are met in advance by the Apostle himself. Thus it might be maintained that the Gentiles have not the advantage of the Jewish law to guide them. St. Paul's answer is, first, that they are not ignorant of moral distinctions, for they have the double light of nature and of conscience; and second, that they will only be judged according to their light, not by the standard of the Jewish law, and yet that this light will suffice to condemn them. Then, anticipating that the Jews would claim to be excused on account of their privileges, St. Paul replies that those very privileges will condemn them, because, although they are favoured with special religious advantages, they do the same bad things that they condemn in the Gentiles. Elsewhere and frequently St. Paul dwells emphatically on the lost state of Jews and Gentiles who alike are dead in trespasses and sins.

Nevertheless, St. Paul does not maintain that there is nothing but evil in mankind before redemption. Conscience is not ineffectual among the heathen, for there are Gentiles who "do by nature the things of the law" (Rom. ii. 14). When describing his own condition before Christ was revealed to him, St. Paul writes of his hatred of sin, his wish to do good, his

delight in the law of God, his serving the law of God with the mind while with the flesh he served the law of sin (vii. 15–25). Thus he teaches the universal prevalence of sin, the depth and intensity of the guilt of mankind, and the utter inability of the world to save itself—though he does not affirm a state of absolute corruption without any admixture of good.

The universal prevalence of so fearful an evil naturally prompts the question of its origin, and leads us to ask how it came to spread its dominion over the whole world. St. Paul does not answer these questions directly; since his purpose is wholly practical, he proceeds at once to point to the remedy without delaying to turn aside to speculative inquiries. Still, indirectly he furnishes us with two explanations. The first is *historical.* The universal sin of the race and its death penalty are traced back to the transgression and doom of the first man. This is not done in connection with the Apostle's treatment of sin, but only allusively, in order to supply an analogy to the work of Christ, who also, as one individual, effects vast changes in the whole world. Such an introduction of a subject, which is never considered by the Apostle on its own account, should make us pause before we permit his words to bear the enormous weight of all the Augustinian and Calvinistic theology that has been built upon them. We must recollect that the idea of the relation of Adam and his sin to the race did not originate with St. Paul, or in any school of Christian theology. Elsewhere, when establishing his own specific theses, the Apostle is vehemently argumentative. Here he

does not think of proving his assertion; neither does he proclaim it as a revelation, as part of the "mystery" he preached: he simply appeals to it as something already known and admitted by his readers, saying, "*As* through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin," etc. (Rom. v. 12). This idea was a tenet of Jewish theology recognised by both the great schools, that of Alexandria and that of Jerusalem, as a legitimate inference from Gen. iii. It is found in the Alexandrian Book of Wisdom, where we read, "Through envy of the devil came death into the world" (ii. 24), and in Ecclesiasticus, which was written by a Jew of Jerusalem, in which we read, "Of the woman came the beginning of sin, and through her we all die" (xxv. 24). But St. Paul holds the doctrine; therefore, although he received it in his rabbinical training, his retention of it after becoming a Christian apostle requires us to treat it as a part, though not a prominent part, of his theology. The exact idea is that death passed to the race as a fatal consequence of the sin of Adam—*i.e.*, the primary thought is not hereditary sin, but hereditary fruits of sin. Thus we read, "By man came *death*. . . . As in Adam all *die*" (1 Cor. xv. 21, 22). At the same time, the sin of Adam is attributed to the race. This seems to be the meaning of the much-debated clause at the end of Rom. v. 12: "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passeth unto all men, *for that all sinned*," etc. Although we may agree with the Revisers in retaining the rendering "for that" for the Greek words ἐφ' ᾧ,

a rendering for which the usage of St. Paul elsewhere suggests a justification (viz., in 2 Cor. v. 4; Phil. iii. 12), in preference to the Vulgate rendering "in whom" (*in quo*), so that the phrase means "since all sinned," "because all sinned," and gives the reason for death coming upon all; still, a consideration of the whole passage shows that even with this more probable translation the words cannot point to the separate, personal sinning of individual men. The Apostle cannot mean that all die because all sin in their responsible, private lives. To insert a clause to that effect would be to shatter his whole argument. He is drawing an analogy between the influence of Adam upon the race, and the corresponding influence of Christ. His point is that just as from the one, Adam, death comes to all, so from the One, Christ, life comes to all. But if all die on account of the separate sinning of each individual, the analogy vanishes. Then it is not the fact that all die for their own personal sins: this cannot be affirmed of infants. Further, the Aorist ("all *sinned*," ἥμαρτον) is better understood of a single act than of the continuous stream of individual misdeeds which reached down to the time of the Apostle. For these reasons, even though we should accept the first rendering of the clause, we must still understand it to refer to the notion that when Adam sinned all his descendants sinned in him; just as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews maintains that when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, Levi did so (Heb. vii. 9, 10). Elsewhere St. Paul says, "Through the one man's disobedience the many were constituted sinners"

(Rom. v. 19). It is difficult for us to enter into the Apostle's thought; but the apparent harshness of his teaching will be mitigated when we consider his treatment of sin itself. He writes of it, in the singular number, almost personifying it, as a sort of power which takes possession of men and reigns over them (ver. 21). In modern language we might say that it was a virus, a disease germ in the soul. This latent sin is dormant and innocuous until it is roused to activity by means of the provocation of law (vii. 8, 9). Now, so long as it is not personally adopted and encouraged, the Apostle does not charge it with guilt. The sin which has not emerged into consciousness under the influence of law is "not imputed" (v. 13). The statement of this significant truth comes immediately after the assertion that all sinned in Adam, and is evidently intended to balance that assertion. Instead of saying that the sin of Adam is imputed to his innocent descendants, St. Paul says the exact opposite: they are *not* innocent, but sin is *not* imputed to them—*i.e.*, the race of Adam shares his sin, but not his guilt. Even where St. Paul uses the phrase "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. ii. 3) he does not predicate innate guilt, because the word "nature" (φύσις) is used for habit or custom, as well as for what is more original and essential. St. Paul's idea of human solidarity may be strange to our views of the subject; but the modern equivalent lies in the doctrine of heredity, which teaches that vice is inherited, and that children are not to be blamed for the moral taint they thus receive from their parents, but only for their conscious, voluntary acquiescence in it.

These considerations bring us to the other explanation of sin which emerges in the writings of St. Paul —the *psychological*. The seat of sin is the flesh. Primarily, the flesh is the substance of the body. In Rom. viii. 13 the terms "flesh" and "body" are used synonymously. Blood relationship is "according to the flesh" (i. 3); a bodily trouble is a "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. xii. 7). Accordingly it has been maintained by Holsten, and less absolutely by Pfleiderer, that in connecting sin with the flesh St. Paul is adopting the Hellenic idea of the essential evil of matter, and teaching that sin is due to the influence of the body on the soul. There are grave objections to this view. (1) There is no evidence that St. Paul was to any considerable extent under the influence of Greek thought. His whole training was Jewish and Palestinian. But this doctrine is quite alien to Palestinian Judaism. (2) He does not teach that the flesh is evil. Sin dwells *in* the flesh—quite another thought. St. Paul writes about cleansing the flesh (2 Cor. vii. 1), and he says that the body of the Christian is a temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19). (3) If the flesh were to be identified with sin, if matter were to be considered as inherently evil, sin would be contemporaneous with creation. This St. Paul does not hold; on the contrary, he refers to sin entering the world after the creation of man (Rom. v. 12). (4) Sins not connected with the body are described as works of the flesh—*e.g.*, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings (Gal. v. 19–23). The Corinthians are proved to be carnal because of their partisan spirit (1 Cor. iii. 3). Greek

philosophy was not, for the most part, of any "sensational" school, yet St. Paul calls that which prevailed at Corinth "fleshly wisdom" (2 Cor. i. 12).

For these reasons it has been common to understand the "flesh" of St. Paul's writings as a word signifying man, the whole man, body and soul, especially when viewed in his frailty and imperfection and contrasted with God—a familiar Old Testament usage. This opinion is fully expounded by Professor Dickson in his Baird Lectures, on the basis of arguments suggested by Wendt. But although no doubt St. Paul does sometimes employ the Hebrew idiom (*e.g.*, Rom. iii. 20), the appeal to it as an adequate basis for explaining the Apostle's doctrine of the relation of sin to the flesh is beset with difficulties. The notions of separation from God and antagonism to God are not found in the ancient usage of the word "flesh," according to which man is only contrasted with God on account of his feebleness, his frailty. The evil associations of the word "carnal" do not spring from the simple, pathetic Hebrew idea. Moreover, the metaphor does not readily lend itself to St. Paul's abstract thought. In the Old Testament the word "flesh" is used concretely for mankind. We find no precedent there for the notion of "the flesh" as an abstract idea of humanity. Still less can the adjective "carnal" come from the older usage. We speak of "somebody," and we count "heads." But we cannot therefore make the words "bodily" or "heady" equivalent to "human." Then, often "flesh" with St. Paul does not stand for the whole man. The Spirit is set over against the flesh.

Professor Dickson understands this of the Spirit of God, or the power and energy of God working in man; so that the contest between Spirit and flesh is that between God and God-given influences on the one hand, and the whole man in his natural state on the other. No doubt St. Paul usually associates the thought of the Divine Spirit and His influence with the notion of the spiritual in human nature. Still, he also holds that man has a spiritual nature, and he refers to his own personal spirit. Thus, in 1 Cor. v. 3, St. Paul writes of being "absent in the body, but present in the spirit"; and, as an equivalent expression, he writes in Col. ii. 5, "Though I am absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit," plainly meaning his own human spirit. Similarly he writes, "I myself with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. vii. 25). Here again the mind (νοῦς) is contrasted with the flesh as a part of the Apostle's natural being, showing that the flesh does not include the whole man.

We are driven back, then, to something approaching the primary meaning of the word "flesh." Yet, as we have seen, this cannot be accepted in strict literalness. It seems that we must find a solution of the riddle, as Beyschlag has indicated, by starting with the physical meaning of the word "flesh," but enlarging its content. Thus primarily sin has its seat in the body. St. Paul writes of the law of sin in his "members," and he cries, "Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" (ver. 24). Here sin is closely associated with the animal organism. Further, whenever it is called "carnal" it

is still in some way connected with our lower nature. Thus St. Paul, when writing of indwelling sin, inserts the explanatory clause "in my flesh," saying, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (ver. 18). There would be no meaning in that insertion if the self were always identical with the flesh. He must mean that sin dwells in him during his unregenerate state—and it is this state he is writing of—by reason of the self being then practically identical with the lower nature. As the domain of the flesh enlarges, it comes to cover the sensuous as well as the sensual, and then the worldly, since the world touches us through the senses and incessantly appeals to our lower nature. Thus even philosophy can become carnal by failing to take notice of the higher spiritual life and truth.

St. Paul never accounts for these facts, never brings his two descriptions of sin together, never connects the evil in the flesh with the fall of Adam. Each thought is treated by itself. Yet there is no inconsistency between them. Moreover, St. Paul's description of the genesis of personal sin neither goes back to Adam nor rests in the doctrine of the flesh. He evidently distinguishes the sin of conscious guilt from the great abstraction "Sin," which he elsewhere almost personifies, and treats as a potentate ruling over mankind. Conscious, personal sin, while it dwells in the flesh, is not a natural product of the lower life; it consists in positive enmity to God. Even in its sensual forms it does not spring only from bodily lusts. Here St. Paul is more profound than St. James, penetrating beneath the carnal

desires to the spiritual apostasy which gives the reins to them (i. 18–25). In a subtle analysis he traces the sin of men back to their wilful neglect of God in nature and conscience, and the consequent degradation of religion. Through abandoning the uplifting and preserving influences of spiritual religion they not only fall into idolatry, they also sink down to immorality. This is a vital consideration; for the remedy must be as deep as the disease. Inasmuch as sin is more than moral corruption, its cure must be more than ethical reformation. Since sin consists essentially in apostasy from God, redemption must be nothing less than a reconciliation issuing in a restoration of communion with God.

Finally, it is to be observed that, while St. Paul frequently alludes to Satan, he never does so in connection with the genesis of sin. The devil is a malignant author of physical evil, disease, and death; but he is overruled by Providence, and utilised as an instrument for just and wholesome chastisement (*e.g.*, 1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. xii. 7). He is also a dominant spiritual power, "the god of this age," who has blinded the minds of the unbelieving (2 Cor. iv. 4), "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2); but Adam and the flesh are more closely associated with sin than is Satan, because the latter is regarded as a somewhat remote, foreign potentate, while the sources of sin lie nearer home. The guilt of sin cannot be thrown back from man to the devil, because the action of the latter is conditioned by the characters and wills of his subjects. Thus he blinds the

minds of *unbelievers*, and works in the sons of *disobedience*. The lack of faith and obedience on the part of men precedes the exercise of the spiritual power of Satan, and supplies the point of attachment without which he could not lay hold of his victims.

III. JESUS CHRIST

Jesus Christ, the personal, living Redeemer and Lord, was the centre of St. Paul's religious life and thought, and the inspiring subject of all his preaching. In the first place he taught that Jesus was the Christ, that the hopes of the fathers and promises of the prophets came to a focus and found their fulfilment in the Man of Nazareth, who had been crucified in shame, but who had been raised by God in glory. To the world at large, where Jewish anticipations were unknown, St. Paul had to explain the ideas as well as the realisation of them. So he preached, as his accusers said, "another King, one Jesus" (Acts xvii. 7). For himself Jesus Christ was emphatically "the Lord," before whom he stood as a humble "bondservant" (δοῦλος). The glow of passionate love, the awe of reverence, the confession of total surrender and absolute obedience which mark the Apostle's regard for his Lord testify to the highest appreciation even apart from any theory of the nature of their object. He must be supremely good and great who could command such adoring affection. But we may go further. Although the Apostle never attempts to give us an exact

account of his ideas of Christ in one complete picture, we may gather from his many scattered statements the several traits of a fairly definite portrait.

There can be no doubt that St. Paul believed in the true humanity of our Lord. He despised knowledge of Christ after the flesh compared with the spiritual knowledge revealed to those who have inward experience of the Spirit of Christ; but this very contempt for the barely external implies that Jesus did live as a man in the common earthly life. He "was born of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. i. 3). He was "born of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4). St. Paul makes no reference to the miraculous form of the birth of Christ. He may not have heard of it. But he says nothing to conflict with it. There is no reason to think that his allusion to the seed of David points to Joseph, whose genealogies in the line of David are given in two Gospels, for he may have been aware that Mary was of the same line. His silence on this subject cannot be used as an argument as to the historical facts of the case either way, because we have no ground for saying that he must have known what had happened, or that if he had known it he was under any necessity to write about it. The neglect of this point, however, suggests that St. Paul rested his belief in the Divinity of Christ on considerations that were quite independent of the physical mode of His birth.

St. Paul teaches the personal sinlessness of Christ. He writes of "God sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3); a phrase which, taken by itself, might point to phantasmal Docetism—the idea

that Christ had not a real body of flesh, had only the appearance of such a body: but this interpretation is quite excluded by those other passages just quoted which make mention of the actual corporeal nature of our Lord. It is evident that the careful language of the Apostle is designed to exclude the thought of any sin attaching to the human nature of Christ. He had flesh, as we learn elsewhere, but not sinful flesh. The moral birth-taint of hereditary corruption which the Apostle calls "sin," although it does not include guilt until the will has consented to it, was not found in Christ. He was born as an unfallen man. Neither did He commit sin in His conscious, voluntary actions, for He "knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21). It is commonly said that St. Paul based this doctrine on his exalted conception of the glorious Christ whom he knew after the resurrection by spiritual experience. This may well be the case. Such a Christ as St. Paul knew *could* not have been a sinner on earth. Yet why should we exclude any reference to the earthly history? St. Paul had held conversations with the companions of our Lord; and although he did not derive the great principles of his gospel from these men, he must have been eager to learn from them details of the life of Jesus. He always quoted traditional sayings of Christ with the greatest reverence, and appealed to them as a final authority distinctly higher than that of his own inspired teaching (*e.g.*, 1 Cor. vii. 10, 12). Therefore we may assume that he knew how they who had watched their Lord most closely were convinced of His sinlessness.

A doctrine peculiar to St. Paul among New Testament writers is that of the Second Adam. The Apostle would have found seed thoughts in Jewish speculations concerning the Messiah, but he alone has worked out the conception in its direct application to Jesus Christ, and shown that our Lord is the Founder of a new order of humanity—the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. viii. 29). Weighty inferences may be drawn from this idea. Thus Christ is seen to be identified with mankind in its perfection and glory. Then the aim of His work must have been to effect more than a restoration of what Adam had ruined; it was also to carry on the progress of man beyond redemption up to perfection; from which it has been argued that according to St. Paul's teaching Christ would have come, the incarnation would have taken place, even if there had been no sin and fall of man. God's idea of man is only fully realised in Christ as in the firstfruits, and through Christ in His followers. Lastly, Christ must be of a most exalted nature in order to be the Founder and Leader of the new humanity. Although absolute Divinity may not be involved in the notion of the Second Adam, we are prepared by that notion for the perception of the higher truth. Here is no approach to the Arian doctrine of an intermediate creature, neither truly God nor truly man. It is rather a preparation for the thought of the closer union of God and man through the lifting of man nearer to God.

St. Paul certainly believed in the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and taught it to his converts. He felt no

compunction in applying to our Lord phrases which the Old Testament plainly used for Jehovah (*e.g.*, Rom. x. 12–14). This is in agreement with the custom of other Apostles. Although the practice does not include a direct affirmation of Divinity, it is inconceivable that any amount of negligence could have permitted it to creep in if Jesus had been held to be only a man. But the Apostle is much more explicit. He refers to our Lord as the Son of God (*e.g.*, Gal. i. 16), and as God's *own* Son (τὸν ἑαυτοῦ υἱόν, Rom. viii. 3; τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ, ver. 32). These exact expressions exclude the notion that the title is used only in the theocratic sense in which, perhaps, the Jews attributed it to the Messiah, without any assertion of personal Divinity. They plainly point to a real Sonship belonging to our Lord essentially and by nature. In Rom. i. 4 St. Paul says that He was "declared (or determined, ὁρισθέντος) to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead." From this passage some have inferred that St. Paul taught that our Lord did not attain to Divine Sonship till after the resurrection. But we must interpret the words in harmony with what the Apostle writes elsewhere. Thus he tells us that God *sent* His Son (Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iv. 4), an expression which, apart from its probable reference to pre-existence, certainly implies that when Jesus came into the world He was God's Son, and therefore that He could not have waited until the end of His earthly life for the realisation of His Sonship. The resurrection simply defined the Sonship, made it clear, and made God's recognition of it

clear too. In this passage the "Spirit of holiness" corresponds to the "flesh" of the previous verse. Together they make up the complete being of Christ. Thus the "Spirit of holiness" is the Divine in Christ, which is one side of His nature as Son of God, over against the flesh of the seed of David, the other side of His nature as man. There is just one passage in which, if the text is correct—and there are no manuscript discrepancies—and if we may follow the most natural rendering, St. Paul departs from his usual practice in calling Christ the Son of God, and names Him directly "God," with the most exalted attributes —viz., Rom. ix. 5: "of whom (*i.e.*, the Jews) is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all God blessed for ever. Amen." The fact that this expression is without parallel in the writings of St. Paul has led some to translate the words in a less obvious and natural way, by making the sentence end at "flesh," and taking the last words as a separate doxology— "He who is God over all be blessed for ever." But the insertion of a doxology in the middle of an argument would be strangely abrupt. Elsewhere the Apostle ascribes very exalted attributes to our Lord. He is the Mediator of creation—"through whom are all things" (1 Cor. viii. 6); of old He existed in the essential form of God (ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, Phil. ii. 6); He is the "image of God" (2 Cor. iv. 4), so that we know God by knowing Christ.

The pre-existence of Christ is distinctly asserted in the writings of St. Paul. We cannot certainly infer it from the assertion that God *sent* His Son. But other phrases clearly point to this idea. Thus in

2 Cor. viii. 9 we read, "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor." The example of Christ is here cited as a stimulus to the Corinthians. But how could it be so applied if the Apostle could go back no further than the earthly life of our Lord in the carpenter's home at Nazareth? Still more distinct is the famous passage Phil. ii. 5–11, on which the *kenotic* theories are chiefly based. The Apostle opens by describing our Lord as first "being in the form of God," and then, instead of grasping at equality with His Father, taking the very opposite course. He "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men," etc. Strangely enough, some have assigned all this humiliation to the lowly conduct of our Lord on earth. But the reference to the Divine glory and the self-emptying precedes any mention of the earthly life. He emptied Himself first; then, as a result of this action, He appeared on earth. Moreover, His humiliation began in His being made in the likeness of men. What does this mean but the very inception of the incarnation? Again, it must be clear that the previous state was one of great fulness and glory. Christ did more than lay aside His glory; He gave up powers and attributes, and came down to the limitations of human consciousness. He not only threw off robes of majesty, He *emptied Himself.* Such words must denote what is personal and internal. For His wonderful act of grace culminating in submission to death Christ has given to Him the highest name of honour. Since this experience of our Lord's is not a mere resumption of a former

state, but a direct reward from God, it would seem to point to a higher exaltation than that of the first condition. But we must not press the inference. St. Paul contemplates the final exaltation from the standpoint of the earthly life, not from that of the pre-existence. Viewed thence it appears as a glorious recompense.

At the same time, this ascription of greatness to our Lord goes along with a certain idea of subordination. It is not the Arian subordination of the creature who has a beginning in time. Christ is the Son, not a creature; and there is no reference to any beginning of His pre-existence—a strange idea which never seems to have been thought of by the Apostle. Certainly the drift of his teaching is against it. Still, Christ is in a degree subject to His Father. God *sent* His Son, and the Sender must be superior to the Sent. Christ did not treat equality with God as a thing He would grasp at (Phil. ii. 6). He did not rise from the dead in His own strength. Describing the resurrection, St. Paul uses the passive voice, "He hath been raised" (1 Cor. xv. 12), or he says God "raised" Him up (ἤγειρε, ver. 15). Similarly, it is God who exalts Him. All things come only through (διά) Christ as the Mediator; but they come originally out of (ἐκ) God as the First Cause. In the great future triumph, "when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 28). It is not possible to limit these words to the human nature of Christ, because the title "the Son," not

"Jesus," is used, and this always points to the Divine in Christ. Moreover, St. Paul never distinguishes between the human and the Divine in our Lord in such a way that anything like personality could be ascribed to the former exclusively. He thinks of one person throughout as the Son of God, who was "formed in fashion as a man," and afterwards exalted to the highest glory.

We must turn to the Epistle to the Colossians for the completion of St. Paul's Christology. In this late work we find that the Apostle has advanced to more exalted ideas of the nature and functions of Christ than he had set forth in any previous epistle. All the writings of the Captivity enrich our conceptions of the greatness of our Lord. As we have seen already, the Epistle to the Philippians most distinctly accentuates the glory of the pre-existence and the grace of the incarnation, followed by the resultant and final exaltation. The Epistle to the Ephesians sets before us a picture of Christ wedded to His Church, and in another image, Christ the Head of the body. But in the Epistle to the Colossians we see the relation of our Lord to the whole universe. He is "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Col. i. 15). The latter phrase does not affirm that He is a part of creation. The universe is created; Christ is begotten. The title "firstborn" does not imply that creation was also begotten, for it is used as a name of honour for the heir. It suggests priority of origin and primacy of rank. This is clear, because in the next clause we read, "For *in Him* were *all* things created" (ver. 16), showing that He stands

above creation, which only comes into being through His mediation. In opposition to an incipient Jewish Gnosticism, which distributed the operations of God through a whole hierarchy of angels, St. Paul affirms that these beings, thrones, dominions, principalities —presuming they exist—were all created through Him and unto Him. Here He is more than the Mediator of creation, as He appears to be in an earlier expression (1 Cor. viii. 6). He is its end; all things lead up to Him; all were created *unto Him.* This is a new thought. It marks a distinct advance.

It would be a mistake, an absurd anachronism, to attempt to arrange these ideas as parts of a systematic scheme of the Trinity. St. Paul never speculates on the essential inner life of God apart from His relation to the universe. He follows our Lord's example in frequently describing God as the Father. He writes of "God" (the Father) absolutely. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. St. Paul does not hesitate to call the Holy Ghost the Spirit of Christ, without making any attempt to guard the barriers of separate personality (*e.g.*, Rom. viii. 9). Nevertheless, the Spirit is not impersonal, for the Apostle mentions His action and even His will (1 Cor. xii. 11). His full Divinity is clearly taught, for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost is treated as identical with the indwelling of God (iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16). But though the Apostle attempts no metaphysical synthesis of the doctrine of the Trinity, he certainly affirms the fundamental Trinitarian ideas. Thus, for example, in the benediction he directly indicates both the Divinity and the threefold existence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (xiii. 14).

IV. REDEMPTION

The great joy and confidence of St. Paul in the proclamation of his gospel spring out of the assurance that the deliverance of men from the ruin of sin, as well as the further advance of the sons of God on to perfection, are effected by God Himself, who of His own will accomplishes these results. God *sent* His son. Salvation is a gift (δωρεά), by means of which sinners are justified gratuitously (δωρεάν), a favour (χάρισμα) originating in the pure kindness (χάρις) of God. This doctrine of free grace lies at the root of the Apostle's teaching. On the one hand, it reproves the folly of attempts at self-salvation by showing that they are as needless as they are hopeless—that we cannot save ourselves, and that we are not required to produce, purchase, or deserve our own salvation. On the other hand, it manifests the merciful disposition of God, who has not to be propitiated—in the heathen sense of the word, *i.e.*, induced to become gracious—because from the first He is gracious, desiring our salvation, and making provision for it at the greatest cost to Himself, even the sacrifice of His own Son. St. Paul traces this wonderful Divine movement back to two motives. The first is the love of God. Thus he says, "God commendeth His own *love* toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8); and "in *love* having foreordained us unto adoption as sons" (Eph. i. 4, 5). Christians are "vessels of mercy" (Rom. ix. 23). The second motive is the righteousness of God. God so justifies as to

manifest His own righteousness (iii. 25, 26). The term "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη) is never used by St. Paul for punitive justice, for which he has another word (δικαιοκρισία, ii. 5). He always employs the term in an ethical sense. Nor do we ever find the idea it contains set in opposition to love; but, as in the Old Testament (*e.g.*, Psalm lxxi. 17; xcviii. 2; ciii. 17), it is directly associated with mercy. Righteousness seeks just what love seeks—viz., the destruction of sin.

St. Paul is equally decided in connecting the work of redemption with Jesus Christ, not only as the agent and instrument for effecting the gracious Divine purpose, but also as Himself willingly carrying out the work because of His own love for mankind. "God was *in Christ* reconciling the world unto Himself" (2 Cor. v. 19). To this end not only do we read that "God sent forth His Son" (Gal. iv. 4), but also that our Lord Jesus Christ "gave Himself" (i. 4); so that the Apostle can write of Him with adoring gratitude as "the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself up for me" (ii. 20). The Person of Christ is the object of love and faith, because our salvation is attributed to our Lord Himself, and not merely to some experience under which He was passive. His whole life, too, is associated with this great work—His advent, His incarnation, His ministry, His death, His resurrection, His ascension (Rom. viii. 34). Yet there is this difference between St. Peter's references to the life of Christ and those of St. Paul, that while the former dwells on the course of the earthly ministry of One who "went about

doing good," on the deeds and the sufferings which he himself had witnessed, the latter directs our attention to the great initial acts of coming into the world, undertaking the work of salvation, etc., and the final consummation in death and resurrection. The essential worth of Christ's work seems to be traced by St. Paul to obedience. Thus he says, "As through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of One shall the many be made righteous" (v. 19). Here St. Paul's doctrine of solidarity emerges, showing that the incarnation by which Christ is related to us as the Second Adam conveys to us grace, just as the first Adam's relationship conveyed sin. The resurrection also has a vital connection with the work of Christ. He was raised up for our justification (iv. 25). This cannot merely mean the assurance of the Messiahship of Christ. The resurrection is the sign of God's acceptance of Christ; and it is more, it is the evidence that Christ lives. He lives to justify us as a present, active Saviour.

While, however, the very being of Christ and His whole life-mission, especially His incarnation and His resurrection, are involved in the vast task of redeeming the world, St. Paul assigns a place of honour to our Lord's death. He not only preaches a crucified Christ, but his message is emphatically "the word of the Cross" (1 Cor. i. 18). He teaches that Jesus Christ died to save the world. This is distinctly Pauline doctrine. It is not found in the speeches in the Acts; it is not found in St. Peter until after that Apostle has come under the influence

of St. Paul.* It is prominent in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in St. John's writings; but these are all late works. Yet St. Paul does not claim to have discovered it, or to have had it as a special revelation, as he claims his peculiar gospel of free justification apart from the law to have come to him directly from God; for he places this truth side by side with the detailed evidence for the resurrection as part of the deposit which he has received, saying, "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3). Possibly his reference is to a tradition of our Lord's words about giving His life as a ransom for many (Mark x. 45), or to the statement at the institution of the Lord's Supper, which St. Paul himself quotes (1 Cor. xi. 25). The mention of the Scriptures points to Isa. liii., a favourite passage with the Apostles, meditation on which might have led to the thought that our Lord's death was designed by God to have an atoning efficacy. Yet it must have been the individual inspiration of St. Paul by the Spirit of God which enabled the Apostle to work out from these data a great doctrine of the Cross, which for clearness and fulness is really new, and constitutes a forward step in the development of revelation.

When we inquire how the death of Christ can materially contribute to the effecting of our salvation, we find many luminous hints in the writings of St. Paul, although his ideas on the subject are never

* In 1 Peter, which shows acquaintance with some of St. Paul's writings.

gathered into one complete theory. He tells us that Christ died for us and for our sins. It has been pointed out that, while he uses the terms "concerning" (περί) and "on behalf of" (ὑπέρ), he never employs the phrase "instead of" (ἀντί) in this connection. He says that Christ died *on our behalf* and *because of* our sins; he does not in so many words say that Christ died *in our stead*. And yet in a certain sense must not this be true of the whole broad fact? We were under the death penalty; but now we need not perish: the ground of our escape is that Christ died. What is this but saying that Christ died instead of our dying? St. Paul, however, does not go the step further of saying that Christ suffered the very death we would have endured, or that He was punished instead of us. He did not die the very death we should have died, for that is eternal death, which Christ did not suffer; and we do not escape the very death He died, for He died a bodily death, and that we must die (physically, though not in its moral significance). Still, He died on the Cross that we might not die eternally. In this sense His dying is instead of our dying.

There are two strong expressions which bring out most forcibly St. Paul's idea of our Lord's redeeming sufferings. He tells us that Christ was made to be "sin (ἁμαρτίαν) on our behalf" (2 Cor. v. 21), and "a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13). The first of these terms cannot mean "a sin offering," because the phrase for that is different (viz., περὶ ἁμαρτίας),* because in the preceding clause the word

* *E.g.*, Rom. viii 3; conf. Lev. xvi. 5 and Heb. x. 8.

"sin" occurs in the ordinary sense ("Him who knew no sin"), and because the following clause—to which the one under consideration is in direct antithesis—refers to righteousness as the opposite of the sin here mentioned. Neither can we follow Holsten in supposing St. Paul to mean that Christ was really made a sinner when He became a man, and so came in for a share of Adam's sin since that was latent in the race, though without being guilty of personal sin; for this is contrary to what we have seen to be St. Paul's express teaching. The daring phrase probably means that Christ was treated as a sinner, so that He came into the shame and horror and suffering of sin. The second expression is more clearly elucidated by the context. The whole sentence runs: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Here it is to be noticed that St. Paul does not say that Christ endured the curse of *the law*, for he does not repeat the definite article, as he must have done if this had been his meaning. He does not write that Christ became "*the* curse," but that He became "*a* curse." Moreover, he tells us what this curse was. It consisted in crucifixion. To be crucified was to be cursed: "for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Jesus was not crucified because He was cursed; He was cursed because He was crucified. That is what St. Paul distinctly affirms. We have no justification for importing the notion of some mysterious additional curse pronounced by God over the head of the Sufferer.

Three most significant words are employed by St. Paul in describing the atoning efficacy of the life, and especially the death, of Jesus Christ. These are—"reconciliation" (καταλλαγή, 2 Cor. v. 18, 19); "propitiation" (ἱλαστήριον, Rom. iii. 25); and "redemption" (ἀπολύτρωσις, ver. 24). There need be little difficulty with the first of these. It implies that sin consists in a quarrel between man and God, and that Christ puts an end to that quarrel, and brings us back into friendly relations with our Father. It is to be remarked that St. Paul never writes of any reconciling of God to man; he only mentions the reconciling of the world to God. No doubt the Greek word (ἀπολύτρωσις) has a double bearing, and signifies a mutual relationship; so that even when it is used for one person being reconciled to another, it may imply a new favourable attitude in the second party; and the "not imputing" of sins seems to lean in this direction. But, inasmuch as the reconciliation begins with God's movement, the term cannot be stretched to include a reconciling of God to man. If a third party effected the reconciliation the idea might be implied, but not when God Himself brings it about.

The second word (ἱλαστήριον) is translated "propitiation" in the English Versions. It is used in the LXX. and in Heb. ix. 5 for the "mercy-seat"—*i.e.*, the cover of the ark. But this cannot be its meaning in the Epistle to the Romans, because here it has no article, and we should expect to read "*the* mercy-seat." Besides, we have no reason to suppose that Italian readers would understand an

obscure allusion to the tabernacle furniture without receiving any hint that this was being used as an image of Christ. Lastly, we cannot speak of "the blood" of the mercy-seat. Accordingly some take the word to mean an "expiatory offering." But it never bears that sense elsewhere. Therefore we must interpret it as an adjective signifying "propitiatory." Inasmuch as it is apparently in the neuter gender, it would seem to stand for "a means of propitiation." Still, there remains some difficulty, seeing that it is God who sets forth Christ as this means of propitiation. How can God be said to propitiate Himself? An attempt at the removal of the difficulty has been made by treating the two Divine attributes, Mercy and Justice, as virtually separate persons needing to be reconciled. Then Mercy prepares a propitiation for Justice. But this fanciful drama is not found in St. Paul's teaching. Probably we must understand the propitiation to be that by means of which God acts graciously towards us—as, in fact, "a means of grace," but with this associated idea, that while God always willed to be gracious, it was not possible for His intention to be exercised apart from what Christ was and did. Our Lord removes the obstacle which prevents the grace of God from flowing into the heart of man. To us this looks like propitiating God, because it has the effect of propitiation. Sacrificial allusions point in the same direction. St. Paul's mention of the blood of Christ suggests that His death was a sacrifice, for in the rites of the altar the blood was of primary importance, because it signified the life of the victim surrendered to God for the benefit of those people on

whom it was sprinkled. So does the phrase "for sin" (*περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, Rom. viii. 3), which was a technical term for the sin offering; the Paschal Lamb to which Christ is compared (1 Cor. v. 7) is also sacrificial. These allusions naturally suggest the idea of clearing guilt, and so removing the great hindrance to our enjoyment of God's favour.

The third word is "redemption." This may be a reminiscence of the often-quoted saying of our Lord comparing His death to a ransom. Like Christ, St. Paul refrains from giving us a hint as to the existence of any person—either God (Anselm) or the devil (Origen)—to whom the price is paid. He dwells only on the great cost—the life-blood of Christ (Eph. i. 7), and on the end attained—the liberation of souls. The image is of captives set free. The freedom is both from the curse of the law (Gal. iii. 13), and from the dominion of sin (Rom. vi. 18). At the same time, the Christian is by no means free from obligations. Since he was bought by God, he belongs to God (1 Cor. vi. 19). He has the liberty of sonship, which is associated with intelligent, affectionate obedience.

Thus we are brought to the specific benefits conferred by the work of Christ. In the first place, we have the forgiveness of sins (Col. i. 14). "The wages of sin is death." From the endurance of this awful result of past conduct a way of escape has been made by our Lord (Rom. vi. 23). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (viii. 1). But the work of Christ is not confined to obviating the noxious consequences of sin.

He destroys sin itself. Thus St. Paul writes, "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (ver. 3). Here it is not the condemnation of the offender—who, in point of fact, is acquitted—but the condemnation of sin that the Apostle attributes to God in Christ. We must recollect St. Paul's terrible picture of Sin as a potentate reigning over the world. Now we see God, by means of the mission and sacrifice of Christ, dethroning the monstrous usurper, and condemning it in its peculiar territory, "the flesh." This signification of the phrase is confirmed by the context. In the previous verse we read, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death" (ver. 2). "The law of sin and death" must be the reigning power of evil prevalent in the world. Sinners live under the yoke of that bad law. Their liberation by Christ consists in the fact that they are now set free from its tyranny. Freedom is brought about by the defeat of the monarch Sin, the law and government of which disappear when the power that puts them forth is shattered. Then redemption is also described as a deliverance from the evil world. Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins that He might deliver us out of this present evil world (or age, *αἰών*, Gal. i. 4). Lastly, the work of Christ is positive. He not only delivers, He gives life. He renews—makes us new creatures (1 Cor. v. 17).

These results of the redeeming work of Christ—deliverance from the doom of sin in forgiveness, and liberation from its power in the quickening of a

new life—are intimately connected in the writings of St. Paul, who attributes both directly to Christ. He is not satisfied to let the main work of Christ issue in the first result, and to treat the conquest of sin itself as a mere consequence of human gratitude reflecting on the great blessing of forgiveness. Any such notion is contrary to his teaching in two respects. First, it makes the overthrow of the power of sin a work of man. Secondly, it puts this in a subsidiary position, and at a second stage in the process of salvation. With St. Paul the internal victory won over sin is as really and fully Christ's work as the escape from its doom. With St. Paul, too, this is a primary work of Christ. Moreover, the two results are contemporaneous, and they intercommunicate, so that the one affects the other. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" and "He that is in Christ Jesus is a new creature" are mutually conditioning truths. The forgiveness makes the renewal possible by restoring intercourse with God in the great reconciliation, so that the Divine power of creation is at once received through Christ; and the concomitant renewal makes the forgiveness morally wholesome by saving it from any taint of laxity. This is clear in Rom. viii., where, after opening with a triumphant exclamation of confidence in the freedom of the Christian from condemnation, St. Paul immediately and most significantly adds a description of the new life of moral liberty, connecting the second thought with the first by means of the conjunction "*for*" (γάρ): "There is therefore now no condemnation, etc. . . . *for* the law of the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death," etc.

V. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

No doctrine is more familiarly associated with the name of St. Paul than that of justification by faith. It may be said with truth that this is just the complete statement and theoretical explanation of an idea which was taught practically and implicitly by all the Apostles and Evangelists of New Testament times; for they all offered forgiveness of sins on condition of adhesion to Jesus as Christ. Still, many of them shrank from the consequences which St. Paul unflinchingly deduced. He was the first to give intellectual form to the thought, and the first to disentangle it from the remnants of Jewish conceptions which were essentially inconsistent with it.

History shows that theological definitions are generally forged in the white heat of controversy; and we have to thank the exigencies of polemics for the luminous expositions of Pauline theology which are preserved in the New Testament. The Apostle was compelled to formulate his beliefs with exceptional distinctness in order to defend his own personal position and the claims of his specific teaching. But there was no dispute between St. Paul and his opponents—as at a later date there was between Luther and the Roman Catholics—concerning the nature of justification. Both parties were agreed on this point. The only question was as to the means by which the result desired and aimed at by all was

to be brought about. It is now admitted that the idea of justification which passed over from Judaism to Christianity is not that of an ethical change—the making a bad person good. Indisputably it signifies clearing from a charge of guilt, or even a more general vindication of rightness where no charge has been made—not making right, but declaring a person to be right, and then, by a natural transition, treating him as right. The word "justify" (צָדַק, δικαιόω) is used in this sense both in the Old Testament and in the New. Thus we read, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Psalm cxliii. 2). Our Lord says of the publican, in contrast with the Pharisee, "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other" (Luke xviii. 14). Here we come to the special application of the word which is most frequent in St. Paul. The simplest form of justification is the clearing of the character of an innocent person. In the Old Testament the magistrate who justifies the wicked man is condemned (Prov. xvii. 15). But the Pauline justification is applied to sinners. It designates the legal consequences of forgiveness. The pardoned person is treated as if he were innocent; and this treatment, when viewed in relation to law, is called justification. Hence we come to a specific use of the kindred Greek word for righteousness (δικαιοσύνη). No doubt this word is generally used for rightness of character or conduct. But St. Paul identifies it with justification. Thus, after mentioning a "righteousness of God through faith . . . for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," he immediately adds,

"being justified freely by His grace," etc. (Rom. iii. 22–4; see also v. 17, 18, where the righteousness of ver. 17 is identified with the justification of ver. 18). The sinner who is justified, and therefore treated as righteous, has the new God-given righteousness. This can only mean that by the grace of forgiveness he is put in a new relation to God, the very same relation as that of a man whose conduct had been right. Undoubtedly there would be the dishonesty of the judge who is blamed in the Old Testament for justifying the wicked, if this were all that occurred. But, on the one hand, St. Paul directly connects the justification and its consequent righteousness with the redeeming work of Christ (iii. 24); and, on the other, he always regards the right relation with God as the basis and source of a new character. That this second point is most important may be seen unmistakably when we consider St. Paul's account of his experience in chap. vii., where he is not primarily seeking forgiveness of past sin, but rather liberation from the indwelling tyranny of sin. Yet he attains his end by the justification which he discovers in Christ, and which issues in the condition of freedom from condemnation with which the following chapter opens. Having found the secret of Jesus, he exclaims, "There is therefore now no condemnation," etc. (viii. 1).

St. Paul approaches the question of justification from the standpoint of his early Jewish culture, according to which it appeared to be a result of dutiful obedience to law. Sometimes he uses the word "law" indefinitely, without an article or in a general

sense, for a rule of life (vii. 25; viii. 2), but more often he prefaces it with the definite article; and when this is not followed by any other defining words —when he says simply "the law"—he occasionally refers to the Pentateuch as a book (*e.g.*, Gal. iv. 21), or even to the whole of the Old Testament (*e.g.*, Rom. iii. 19); but usually he means the system of law contained in the Pentateuch, that which is popularly understood as the Mosaic law. He never makes any distinction between the moral law and the ceremonial. He never says that the rules of ritual are to be abolished while the social code is retained. His chief contest with the Judaisers turns on a rite —circumcision; but in his theological discussions he always leans to a consideration of the ethical requirements of the law. These he regards as good. He gives no excuse for the extravagances of his overzealous disciple Marcion in denouncing the law as an evil thing. Thus, referring to the tenth commandment, he writes, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good" (vii. 12). He does not deny that perfect obedience to the law would issue in life; he does not deny, therefore, that theoretically the Pharisees are right in proclaiming justification by law. It is in the insistence on a practical application of their theory that they are wrong. Justification in this way is impossible—not because if the means succeeded the end would not be attained, but because the means never succeed. This leads to a rejection of the law as a way of salvation. It is not bad in itself; it is simply ineffectual. That is no real fault in the law,

The reason of failure is to be found in the flesh, which with St. Paul is sinful. The law is "weak *through the flesh*" (viii. 3). Now, inasmuch as the law confers no power to help us to perform its precepts, if we are to be justified and saved at all it must be by some other method. Here, it would seem, St. Peter agreed with St. Paul, for he, too, appears to have admitted "that a man is not justified by the works of the law" (Gal. ii. 16). But St. Paul went further. He would not allow observance of the law to be superadded as rule of Christian conduct, even though it was not resorted to as a method of salvation. His whole argument in the Epistle to the Galatians is against this practice. Such observance is a return to bondage. For the Christian the law is abolished. God had only granted it as a temporary expedient to lead men to Christ through its provoking sin into activity, and so revealing it. The law never was a means of salvation. St. Paul finds the proofs of his doctrine in the utter failure of the law to effect salvation (Rom. ii., iii.), in the fact that Abraham was justified on another basis before the law was instituted (iv.), and in the triumphant fruits of the method of justification which he preaches (v., viii.).

This method of justification is called "a righteousness of God" (δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ). "But now," says St. Paul, "apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets" (iii. 21). Righteousness is produced by God. It is He who justifies, sets us right with Himself. We must cease our strivings along the line of law, and accept the righteousness which

God gives freely, if we would be justified in His sight. God confers righteousness of His own will, and on whomsoever He chooses (ix. 14–18). This does not mean that the action of God is arbitrary, or without good grounds. It simply means that it is His action. That God has His reasons for justifying some and not justifying others St. Paul plainly teaches when he breaks into a rhapsody of admiration for "the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God" in regard to this matter (xi. 33). The reference to wisdom and knowledge points to great, though inscrutable, reasons for the Divine preference. Further, St. Paul holds that these reasons are associated with the character and conduct of men, since he says, "Whom He *foreknew*, He also foreordained," etc. (viii. 29). It is true the Greek word translated "foreknew" (προέγνω) could mean "foreordained" (1 Peter i. 20); but it usually stands for the signification implied by its etymology (*e.g.*, Acts xxvi. 5). It must have this meaning here, because in this case the Apostle used another word to signify "He foreordained" (προώρισε), and to give both words the same sense is to accuse St. Paul of obvious tautology. When discussing the rejection of Israel the Apostle appears to fall back on the absolute and unconditioned will of God in order to rebuke the impertinence of gainsayers. Here God's will is concerned with the destiny of the nation, rather than with that of individuals. But even in this place St. Paul distinctly states that it was because of their unbelief and their stumbling that the Jews were supplanted. His severe blame of

the Jews implies that the rejection of them was not arbitrary. Nor does he hold that it was final. "Brethren," he says, "my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them that they may be saved" (Rom. x. 1). Therefore, while the image of the potter and the clay is used to silence any questioning of God's right to determine the destinies of men, it cannot be pressed into a declaration that God determines those destinies irrespective of conduct, or that His rejection of any people at some one time is for all time.

On the human side the one condition of justification is faith. We are justified "by faith" (ἐκ πίστεως, v. 1). When St. Paul is writing of faith he is not thinking of the object of St. James's condemnation—the faith that believes in the truth of a proposition, but does not act upon it. His faith is different from that dead faith in two respects. First, its object is a person, not a dogma; it is faith in God (iv. 24), faith in Christ (Gal. ii. 16). Second, it includes an act of will. It is not bare, intellectual assent; it is trust. Such faith involves the whole inner man. "With the heart (*i.e.*, the inner life) man believeth unto righteousness" (Rom. viii. 10). Faith is an active power, for it works through love (Gal. v. 6). Though it is contrasted with the works of the law, still it issues in what the law really aimed at. This faith contains a spirit of obedience. It is directed to One who is a Lord as well as Saviour, and therefore it implies loyalty as well as confidence. So we read of "obedience of faith" (Rom. xvi. 26). Indeed, the very exercise of faith is an act of obedience, because it is what God wills us to practise.

Now, referring to the case of Abraham, St. Paul reminds us how the patriarch's faith was reckoned to him for righteousness (iv. 3). This he takes to be analogous to our justification by faith. He never says that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us. It is faith that is imputed for righteousness, though this is on the ground of our Lord's propitiation. Such a connection of faith and righteousness is not accidental and external. Abraham's personal trust when he received a promise of a child is the type of simple, loyal, heartfelt confidence in God. Whoever has a similar faith is justified, simply because God takes this faith for righteousness. It is an act of grace in Him to do so. There is no merit in the faith, which is not like one solitary work that saves when all the works of the law fail. Nevertheless, it has in it the very essence of a right relation to God. Thus its connection with righteousness is inward, spiritual, vital.

Justification is considered with reference to law, and in discussing it St. Paul draws on his rabbinical training, and plunges into the language of the courts, so that here Christianity is presented to us in legal terms. This was natural to a man of his special training, and perhaps necessary in arguing with law-defending Jews. But when he is not engaged in the controversy with the Judaisers St. Paul drops the legal formulæ and falls back on an entirely different style. Now his mystical nature emerges. He delights to dwell on the personal union of the Christian with his Lord. It is in this way that the Apostle most frequently describes the deepest experiences of the spiritual life.

The Christian dies with Christ, is buried with Him, rises with Him, and is to seek those things which are above where Christ is. The visible experience of Christ on earth is the type and pattern of the spiritual experience of the Christian; and it is more, for it is by union with Christ that His experience is repeated in His disciple. The Christian is "in Christ" (2 Cor. v. 17), and Christ lives in him. Thus St. Paul can say, "I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20). Language such as this is very frequent in the Epistles; it is the Apostle's most characteristic manner of speech. The legal condition of justification is comparatively external, and is concerned with entrance into the new relations with God. Union with Christ is internal, and belongs to the whole course of the Christian life. To St. Paul this is the very essence of Christianity. It is only by a lack of perception for true proportions that we select justification by faith as the chief characteristic of Paulinism. It is the chief characteristic of Pauline polemics. But when he drops controversy, the subject on which St. Paul expatiates most lovingly, and to which he recurs most frequently, is the mystical union with Christ.

Regarded in another way, from its own internal experience, the Christian life is the life of the Spirit. The Christian receives Christ, receives the Spirit of Christ, receives the Holy Spirit (Rom. viii. 9). The results of this great endowment are manifold. It sanctifies us—*i.e.*, consecrates us to the holy service of God. It is an indwelling power for the mastery

of sin and the attainment of holiness. Thus "the law (or rule) of the Spirit" sets us free from "the law of sin" (viii. 2). The result is a higher tone of life and thought with an accompanying sense of life and peace, and especially a new consciousness of sonship, whereby we cry "Abba, Father." The sonship implies freedom as opposed to the old condition of servitude, the double servitude—that of sin and that of law. The indwelling of the Spirit produces gracious fruit—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance" (Gal. v. 22, 23). It also leads to a new insight into the deeper truths of God. "The natural (ψυχικός) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged. But he that is spiritual (πνευματικός) judgeth all things" (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15). This higher attainment is not at once reached by all Christians. Some are still carnal, babes who must be fed with milk (iii. 1, 2); while others have advanced to adult age, and are called by a title used for the initiated in heathen mysteries—viz., "the perfect" (οἱ τέλειοι, ii. 6). Moreover, there are certain specific gifts of the Spirit—such as wisdom, miracle-working, prophecy—which are distributed variously among different Christians (xii. 4–11). While, however, the spring and inspiration of all that is of value in the Christian life is found in the Spirit of God, we are not left to quietism. St. Paul's Epistles abound in practical exhortations. The Christian life is a race, a warfare. We are to work out our own salvation while God works in us (Phil. ii. 12, 13).

VI. THE CHURCH AND ITS ORDINANCES

Following our Lord, and in agreement with the other Apostles, St. Paul always represented Christianity to be a social religion. The unit is not the individual; it is a society. Pauline Christianity could not be perfectly realised in the utmost sanctity of a solitary soul. It is essential for its development that there should be a community of people in whose mutual relations alone the highest spiritual life could be attained. But for the gospel to work as a leaven in general society is not enough; because, although it does this, and thus affects the State and the family, so long as the world is not won to Christ there must be a distinct Christian society smaller than the world, confined to the brotherhood of those who are Christian by confession and life. This new, separate society has its own peculiar duties and privileges, conditioned by the special relationship of its members. Hence there arises a new affection—love of the brethren (φιλαδελφία). "In love of the brethren," writes St. Paul, "be tenderly affectionate one to another" (Rom. xii. 10). To the division of labour, which determines the advance of material prosperity, and the organisation of mutual civic relations which constitutes a nation, there corresponds in the Christian society a separation of function and a mutual co-operation. We are members one of another. We need one another. We exist for the good of the whole body. In a measure we flourish or decline according as our whole brotherhood flourishes or declines.

The name of the Christian brotherhood is "Church" (ἐκκλησία). This word is only found twice in the Gospels on the lips of our Lord. On one of these occasions it is used prophetically of the whole community of Christians in the future (Matt. xvi. 18); on the other it refers to an accessible assembly (xviii. 17). The growth in numbers which followed the great missionary outburst at Pentecost, the course of time which led to the demand for some settled order of Christian life, and the lack of the visible presence of Christ, which threw His disciples more upon one another, were three influences all tending to give greater importance to the idea of the Church. Accordingly this is very prominent in the apostolic era. The word would be familiar to Jews as the Greek name for the "congregation" of Israel (*e.g.*, Judg. xxi. 8). To the Greeks themselves it would suggest an orderly assembly of the enfranchised citizens for the discharge of the business of the State, although it was also used loosely for any concourse of people, even a self-collected mob (*e.g.*, Acts xix. 32). By St. Paul it is applied to two distinct, though related, ideas.

In the first place, the word "Church" stands for a local community of Christians. Thus we read of "the Church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Cor. i. 2), of "the Churches of Galatia" (xvi. 1), and even of the Church in a house (Rom. xvi. 5; Col. iv. 15). The latter phrase may mean the whole Christian community in one locality, this meeting in a private house; or, as the house Church seems to be distinguished from the general Church, more probably

a Christian household. The members of such a Church are all addressed as saints (ἅγιοι). St. Paul is far from assuming that they are immaculate; many of them are very backward, some of them are most faulty, and need the exercise of sharp discipline—to be delivered over to Satan "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved" (1 Cor. v. 5). Still, all are addressed as consecrated men and women; it is assumed that all are true disciples of Christ.

In the second place, St. Paul uses the word "Church" for the whole body of Christians. It is scarcely correct to call this the invisible Church, for it is not ideal, distant, future, or only spiritual. The ties that bind the members are not seen; it has not yet any external organisation, there is no common government of it other than the spiritual government by Christ. Still, it consists of visible members,—all Christian men, women, and children; it is, in fact, the catholic Church, although the word "catholic" is not attached to it by St. Paul, and although the idea of any contrasted Churches in schism or heresy is never contemplated by him. The only schism he knows takes place within the Church. The local Church may be rent by divisions. But all sections of Christians still belong to "the Church of God." This Church is one body, with many members mutually serviceable. It is the body of Christ. When He is thought of as dwelling in it and permeating it, He is regarded as the Soul in relation to the body (1 Cor. xii. 12, 27). Later, when our Lord is contemplated as ruling it, St. Paul changes the image, and writes of Christ as the Head (Eph. iv. 15). In considering the relation of the Church

to God, the Apostle writes of it as God's "tilled field," and God's "building" (1 Cor. iii. 9), because it is His work; and as a "sanctuary" (ναός) of God, because He dwells in it (Eph. ii. 21). In the Church all are brethren; here the distinctions of Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, bond and free, vanish. The idea of the kingdom of God, which is so prominent in our Lord's teaching, recedes in the teaching of the Apostles. St. Paul, as Professor Stevens has pointed out,* describes the Church as the present community of Christians, and the kingdom as something future, to come after our Lord's second advent.

St. Paul discusses many details of the discipline of the Church, but he does not lay down any rules for its definite organisation. He never drops a hint that the Spirit of God is given in any especial way to or through a clerical order. All the members of the Church receive the Spirit. But the gift is variously distributed in different kinds of endowments. All are invited to desire earnestly the greater gifts; and yet charity is better than the best of them (1 Cor. xii. 31) A consequence of the variety of gifts is a corresponding diversity of functions in the service of the Church. Within the local Church the gift of prophecy, *i.e.*, inspired utterance, stands first (Rom. xii. 6); but in relation to the whole Christian economy the Apostles are named first: "And He gave some to be apostles, and some prophets" (Eph. iv. 11). These two classes are most fundamental. The Church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (ii. 20). St. Paul attaches a unique authority to the apostle-

* *The Pauline Theology*, p. 319 ff.

ship, because it owes its appointment to God and its call to Christ, without any intermediate human agency (Gal. i. 1). In his earlier epistles, although there are indefinite references to persons in authority (*e.g.*, 1 Thess. v. 12), no other formal office appears, and even the apostleship is not an office within any Church, but one of general oversight and guidance, by instruction and admonition. Later, in his captivity, St. Paul recognises two orders of the ministry, "bishops and deacons" (Phil. i. 1). The Pastoral Epistles contain careful directions concerning the characters of persons who should be appointed, and Timothy and Titus appear as visiting commissioners in charge of the appointment, but no title is given to them. Here St. Paul identifies the bishop with the elder (Titus i. 5, 7), who is met with in the history of a much earlier period (Acts xi. 30).

Although the Apostle gives no common name, such as "sacrament," to the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, on one occasion he refers to them together, as if they possessed common characteristics (1 Cor. x. 1–4). Baptism is with St. Paul the indication of entrance into the Church. He writes, "In one Spirit were we all baptised into one body" (xii. 13); and again, "As many of you as were baptised into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27). Yet he cannot mean that the mere rite of baptism has brought about the tremendous change which he predicates of all who are in Christ. This would be quite inconsistent with the spirit of his teaching, which was to turn us away from weak and beggarly elements to higher things—Divine and spiritual. His treatment

of circumcision as a carnal ordinance would lose all its force if he substituted for it another carnal ordinance. Moreover, it would be impossible to harmonise this with his definite teaching of justification by faith. His thankfulness that he only baptised two or three people (1 Cor. i. 14, 15) is inconceivable if he attached to baptism the awful importance of the one appointed means of salvation. But as the seal of confession it testifies to the faith that saves. St. Paul expects faith to issue in baptism, and he takes the baptism as a sign of loyal confession. He never refers to infant baptism, but he mentions the baptism of a household, which *may* have contained children (ver. 16). Naturally the Churches to which he wrote would consist chiefly of persons converted in adult age.

St. Paul approaches the subject of the Lord's Supper with peculiar reverence. He is careful to point out that the institution was founded by Jesus Christ Himself, and he cites the full tradition of its origin (xi. 23–5). From this we may gather that he considers the ordinance to be primarily a memorial service; for he quotes the words "This do in remembrance of Me," and adds his own remark, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come." He could not have taken Christ's words literally, so as to teach transubstantiation, because his idea of the resurrection body, which our Lord now possesses, is explicitly not that of a body of flesh and blood. Besides, the blood of Christ as His life given for us is a familiar thought with St. Paul. He must therefore have understood the elements to represent the person

and life. At the same time, St. Paul teaches that the Lord's Supper is a communion (κοινωνία, x. 16)—*i.e.*, a means of real fellowship with Christ, in contrast with the fellowship with demons at idol-feasts. Therefore the Christian is to avoid the contamination of heathen associations, and to keep the Lord's Supper clear of abuses. To fail to discern the Lord's body, to miss Christ in the feast, is to be guilty of wrong to His very person.

VII. THE FUTURE

St. Paul agreed with his brethren of the primitive Church in anticipating the second advent of our Lord. The Parousia is more prominent in his earlier than in his later epistles. But although the thought recedes it is never abandoned; we meet with it as late as the epistles of the Captivity (*e.g.*, Phil. iii. 20; Col. iii. 4). It seems to be indubitable that at first St. Paul expected the great event to happen during his own lifetime. Thus, after referring to the resurrection of the dead, he adds, "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 17); and again, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; . . . the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52). It must be remembered that the Apostle himself mentioned the partial and imperfect nature of prophecy, and included his own gifts in the limitations, when he wrote, "*We* know in part, and *we* prophesy in part"

(xiii. 9), and "Now *I* know in part" (ver. 12). He never professed to foresee the time of the Parousia; but he knew it could not be just due, for he corrected the mistake of the Thessalonians, who were neglecting the duties of daily life in anticipation of the immediate end of the present dispensation, teaching that dark, troublous times must intervene (2 Thess. ii. 2, 3). He identified the second advent of Christ with "the day of the Lord" so often referred to in Hebrew prophecy. It was to be the coming of Christ to judgment. St. Paul teaches that the judgment is to be universal. Christians will not escape it, and they will be judged according to their deeds. In this connection St. Paul makes no reference to his great doctrine of justification by faith. As far as we can gather from his writings generally, he only uses that doctrine in his descriptions of the method of entering the Christian life, and so disposing of the guilt of sin committed before conversion. We must not forget that his main contention with the Galatians turned on the folly of attempting to reach perfection by the method of law after having entered on the Christian life by the new and perfect way of faith. In writing to the Corinthians he said, "We walk by faith" (2 Cor. v. 7). Thus faith is necessary throughout the Christian life. Still, the Christian is accountable for his conduct. The servant of Christ will have to appear before his Master to be judged according to his deeds (ver. 10). The advent of our Lord is followed by His reign. This corresponds to the millennium of the Apocalypse, but St. Paul does not limit it to a thousand years. It will go on as long as it is needed for the conquest of

all Christ's enemies, a victory which will be perfectly achieved. Death itself will be vanquished—*i.e.*, no one will die any more—and probably no soul will any longer be held in thrall to death. When this last enemy is overthrown the Messianic work of Christ will be complete, His Kingship will come to an end, He will deliver up His kingdom to His Father, and God will be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 24–8).

With the second advent of Christ is closely associated the resurrection of the dead. In his earlier writings St. Paul had referred to an intermediate state of sleep (*e.g.*, 1 Thess. iv. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 51). After the riot at Ephesus, as Prof. Sabatier has acutely observed, he seems to have abandoned the expectation of himself living until the Parousia; and thenceforth he appears to have anticipated passing on to the resurrection life at death, the spiritual body being ready when the material body is laid aside (2 Cor. v. 1-10). Therefore to depart and be with Christ is considered by the Apostle to be "very far better" than life on earth—such a life as he had while imprisoned at Rome (Phil. i. 23). St. Paul has no sympathy with the Greek thought of the free, immortal soul. He would not be "unclothed." Yet while he views the subject from the Oriental standpoint, what he means by the resurrection is a return to full active vitality, which he conceives to be attained by rising in a new bodily form; and he repudiates the gross Jewish conception of a recovery of the animal organism. Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Because flesh and blood are corruptible things they will be laid aside

in favour of an incorruptible body—a body which is as adapted to the higher nature of man (πνεῦμα) as the animal body was to the lower nature (ψυχή). This idea of a spiritual body (σῶμα πνευματικόν) is very significant; it marks the Apostle's inspired insight and progress beyond the impossible notions of his contemporaries. He does not say whether the spiritual body is constructed of anything material. He may have imagined it to be a body of pure light, literally and physically radiant. But probably he was satisfied with the general idea of a body suited to the spirit, and far more refined than the animal organism, without knowing what it was to be in its essential nature.

The resurrection thus described by St. Paul is for Christians, for those who have the gift of eternal life in Christ. The Apostle never says anything about a general resurrection of mankind. All his language on the subject is associated with the idea of personal relation to Christ. Thus we have not only the argument from silence against the expectation of the resurrection of those who are not in Christ, but further, the method and process of the resurrection exclude them. Christ is the firstborn among many brethren. We see "Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's at His coming" (1 Cor. xv. 23). According to the earlier teaching, "The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17). Here it is manifest that the emphasis in the first sentence is on "the dead," not on "in Christ"; for the contrast is not with those outside

in Christ, but with the living, "we that are alive"; and all are in Christ, all are to meet their Lord and dwell with Him.

This idea of confining the resurrection to Christians is quite in harmony with the teaching of St. Paul about the lost. He declares that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). Knowing that he accepted the Jewish doctrine of the introduction of physical death by Adam, we cannot doubt that, in the first place, he thinks here of that death. It would seem, then, that primarily the punishment of sin is what we call natural death, and that for the lost this is without a resurrection. We cannot, however, conclude that death brings absolute extinction of being or the total cessation of consciousness. We have seen that it was not affirmed to involve anything of the kind in the teaching of Christ. From St. Paul's earlier epistles it might be supposed that, physically, the state of all the dead is similar, while some are waiting for the resurrection which others have no right to anticipate. Since in his riper meditation it is a joyous prospect to contemplate fellowship with Christ immediately after death, to miss that fellowship and to be excluded from the future kingdom must be a dismal doom. St. Paul refers to the wrath which an impenitent man treasures up for the day of wrath (ii. 5). He may be thinking of judgment on earth, but it is more probable that for most this will correspond to the day of the Lord, which brings light and gladness to those who are in Jesus. Still, St. Paul never says that the punishment of sin is eternal torment. He calls it "corruption" (φθορά—

"he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption," Gal. vi. 8), "destruction" (ἀπώλεια—"whose end is destruction," Phil. iii. 19), and "death."

While death and destruction are the natural consequences of sin, the gospel of Jesus Christ brings eternal life and its accompanying resurrection. Is this gospel offered to the dead, and have those who suffered death in their impenitence still an opportunity of meeting Christ in the future, and so obtaining life through Him? There is much in St. Paul that seems to indicate that glorious idea, though in vague and general outline. Thus the Apostle writes of the complete triumph of Christ, when the last enemy, death, is to be abolished (1 Cor. xv. 26). The final triumph may be imagined in two ways. All the impenitent may be extinguished, put out of being; and one phrase in an early epistle seems to point in that direction. St. Paul writes of those "who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction (ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον) from the face of the Lord," etc. (2 Thess. i. 9). But this phrase is never repeated. On the other hand, the unbounded exultation of the Apostle over the perfectly successful work of Christ and its glorious fruits rather points to another explanation—viz., to the view of the final restoration of all. The whole argument of Rom. v. goes to show how the domain of the redeeming work of Christ is as wide as that of the ruin of sin. In the course of his argument the Apostle says, "So then, as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteous-

ness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life" (ver. 18). It may be replied that this only refers to the provision of salvation and the free offer of it, not to the acceptance and actual realisation of it; still, the conclusion that "where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly" (ver. 20), seems to indicate a success in the gracious work of Christ that is no less than the havock wrought by sin. When, in writing of the resurrection, the Apostle says, "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22), he seems to mean that the life-giving work of Christ is as extensive as the death which is the fate of all mankind. We have seen that he did not teach a general resurrection, a resurrection for those who are not in Christ, and here it is *in Christ* that all are to be made alive. Therefore this passage seems to adumbrate a future union of all with Christ, and their consequent enjoyment of life from Him.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

This anonymous work appears to have been addressed to the Hebrew Christians in Palestine of the second generation, who, discouraged by the failure of their kinsmen to accept Christianity, the disappointment of their hopes of Messianic glory, and the distresses and persecutions with which they were overwhelmed, were beginning to hanker after the old associations of Judaism, doubting whether, after all, they had not made a mistake in exchanging the

Synagogue for the Church. The writer both consoles them in their present calamities and fortifies them against the fascination of the worship of their childhood by an eloquent exposition of the superiority of the new covenant to the old, worked out point by point through the most elaborate argument that is to be found in the Bible. The old covenant did not satisfy the hopes it raised; Joshua did not give the Israelites rest; the priesthood of Aaron and the sacrifices of the tabernacle did not take away sin. Yet God's promises could not fail. They must therefore be fulfilled in another and more perfect order, of which the Levitical system was but the preliminary adumbration. This is found in Christianity. The religion of Jesus Christ contains all that the Jews had learned to love in their old faith, in a better and higher form; contains, indeed, the reality and power of what in Judaism was but shadow and symbol. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is evidently allied to St. Paul in the fundamental elements of his gospel—in the complete abandonment of Judaism, the lofty conception of Christ, the perception of the atoning efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ, the great value attached to faith as the root of personal religion. But in his form of thought, in the whole atmosphere of his teaching, he is far from the methods of the great Apostle. While St. Paul views Judaism as a law directing man's strivings after justification, the author of this Epistle thinks of it as a cult, associated with the tabernacle worship in which priestly functions and sacrifices are provided by God. With the one the law was but an

interlude intended to reveal sin and drive despairing souls to Christ; with the other the Hebrew worship contained great ideas which it did not realise, but which are realised in Christ. Thus in the former aspect the law is done away with absolutely by the introduction of a different and contradictory method of justification; but in the latter the Old Testament religion is fulfilled, and it is abolished only because it is superseded by the New Covenant, which accomplishes the very things the first covenant had proposed.

In the execution of his programme the author proves himself to be a student of Alexandrian thought, familiar with the Book of Wisdom, and echoing Philo. Thus, above the visible world of sense is the invisible, spiritual world, where, in quite Platonic fashion, the archetypes of what are most prized on earth are to be found; the tabernacle, Mount Sion, Jerusalem, the worship and service of God, all have their higher, heavenly counterparts. Yet the writer is not a mere Alexandrian. He is much nearer to St. Paul than to the Hellenist philosopher. Philo allegorises the Old Testament in the most artificial way, making out its narratives to be images of wholly alien philosophic ideas. But in the Epistle to the Hebrews the Old Testament is accepted as a partial anticipation of Christian facts which are similar in kind though greater in attainment as befits the region of spiritual realities to which they belong. The author attaches the highest possible value to the Old Testament as a record of Divine revelation; and though he invariably quotes from the LXX., he

attributes the words cited in the most direct way to God, ignoring the agency of the prophetic speaker or writer. Basing his argument on these Scriptures, he shows how Christianity is a covenant which supersedes the Mosaïc covenant. The idea of the new covenant is the root-thought of the Epistle, by relation to which everything is viewed and tested. Evidently it is derived from the often-mentioned prophecy of Jeremiah that God would grant such a covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31). It has the support of the words of Christ at the institution of the Lord's Supper, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood" (1 Cor. xi. 25). The covenant here, as elsewhere in the Bible, is not an agreement between two parties who bargain on equal terms, but a dispensation originating in God and offered to man on certain conditions with the pledge of Divine promises (not a *συνθήκη*, but a *διαθήκη*). Thus it is a sign of God's goodness to men, a dispensation of grace.

While the idea of the new covenant supplies the form under which the whole scheme of thought is arranged, the realisation of that idea is shown to be in Jesus Christ, and therefore the doctrine of Christ is the primary doctrine of the Epistle. With our author, as with St. Paul, Christianity is just the religion of Christ. All truth radiates from Him, and is estimated by its relation to Him. In describing the person of Christ the writer combines the very highest conception of His Divinity with more emphatic and touching traits of His real humanity than are to be found anywhere else in the New Testament. The Divine Sonship is a favourite idea of the Epistle.

The contrast between the old covenant and the new appears first of all in the difference between the broken and partial revelation by means of prophets and the one perfect revelation in a Son (i. 1, 2). Perhaps it is with an eye to the undue exaltation of angels among the Jews of his day that the author shows how much Christ, as the Son, is higher than the angels, who are but ministering spirits. Coming down to the specific Israelite dispensation, he contrasts the Sonship of Christ in the house of God with the position of Moses, the great founder of the nation, who was but a servant. Joshua, though he led Israel into the promised land, could not give the rest which Christ gives. The whole Levitical system, with Aaron at its head, is inferior to Christianity, chiefly because of its priests' inferiority to Christ. The argument is based on the Old Testament Scriptures, and mostly on passages drawn from Messianic Psalms; but so convinced is the author of the true Divinity of Jesus Christ, he does not hesitate to apply to Him words which were plainly written in the first place of God. Thus he quotes the verses beginning, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth," and assigns them to the Son of God (ver. 10). He has no difficulty in using the word Lord (κύριος) indiscriminately for God and for Christ. Then the Son is heir of all things, and the Mediator of creation—"through whom also He made the worlds" (ver. 2). These two passages plainly imply pre-existence. They are not contradicted by the phrase "this day have I begotten Thee" (ver. 5), because, even if that referred to the human birth or the baptism of our

Lord, it would not exclude previous existence in another sphere—in the latter case previous existence on earth is taken for granted. But we are not driven to this interpretation. In quoting Psalm ii. the writer does not accentuate every word he takes over, and he may not have the significance of this phrase in mind, or he may interpret it in relation to the eternal day of God's thought. At all events, Beyschlag's attempt to show that the pre-existence ascribed to Christ in the Epistle is ideal does violence to the text. He says that the author "in the naïve way of Biblical realism has personified the Logos." * How so? The author is not writing about the Logos, but about the Son. There is not a shadow of an indication that he confuses the personifying of an idea with the idea of a person. The crisp, definite thought of the Son is maintained throughout. In one passage, if we are to read it in the only way the Greek permits—whatever may have been the original meaning of the Hebrew—the writer carries over a direct address to God, and applies it to Christ, quoting the words, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (ver. 8).

In his relation to the Father the Son takes a secondary place. It is God who appointed Him heir of all things (ver. 2), called Him to His own right hand (ver. 13), subjected all things to Him (ii. 8), raised Him from the dead (xiii. 20). He is the most exact revelation of God to us, as the sun's rays (ἀπαύγασμα) are of the sun, as the effigy on the seal (χαρακτήρ) is of its original (i. 3).

* *Neut. Theol.*, vol. ii., p. 30^.

The humanity of Christ is described with unwonted fulness and force. He was made for a time "lower than the angels" (ii. 9). Thus He became a true and complete man subject to human suffering, "who in the days of His flesh having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and having been heard for His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (v. 7, 8). These sufferings were in part for His own needs. They were the means by which as a man He was "made perfect" (τελειωθείς, ver. 9). In one thing only He differed from us: He was sinless. He was tempted, but without sin (χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας)—without any contact with sin, either as the preliminary prompting of evil desire, or as the final issue of the consenting will (iv. 15). His incarnation was essential to His priestly work on behalf of men for two great purposes —first, that He might be their representative before God (ii. 17), and, second, that He might succour them in their trials by means of His sympathy and close union with them (ver. 18).

The doctrine of the high-priesthood of Christ, although in harmony with scattered hints elsewhere, is in its fulness and explicit exposition peculiar to the Epistle to the Hebrews. The author's comparison between the two covenants naturally leads him to consider the sacerdotal office which was so prominent in the earlier one. This he finds far more perfectly realised in our Lord than in the family of Aaron. He begins by affirming of Christ two essential notes

of priesthood. First, the priest must be a man. This idea is dwelt on most earnestly. The author seems to think that human sympathies are quite essential to true priestliness. The priest's very infirmities help him, because he is the best priest who is the most sympathising brother. This idea we see perfectly realised in Christ (iv. 14—v. 2). Then the priest must be appointed by God. The self-made priest is no real priest. But as Aaron was divinely appointed, so also is Christ, in evidence of which fact the author quotes from Psalms ii. and cx. (v. 5, 6). Having thus affirmed the reality of Christ's priesthood, and in this respect its resemblance to that of Aaron, he proceeds to point out the differences between the two. Now Christ's priesthood is compared with that of Melchizedek, King of Salem, whose historical features are almost lost sight of in his typical character. The argument is based on Psalm cx. combined with allusions to the history in Genesis and to facts in the life and death of Christ. These data give rise to the following conclusions that go to show the superiority of the priesthood of Christ to that of Aaron :—(1) The Levitical high-priesthood was held in succession by a series of mortal men; Christ is the one High-priest abiding for ever. (2) Abraham doing homage to Melchizedek is a sign that the priesthood of his descendants is inferior to that of the King of Salem; Christ, who is after the order of Melchizedek, takes the higher rank of one who receives this homage. (3) Aaron and his sons, being sinful, needed to offer for themselves before they could atone for their brethren; Christ, being sinless, had no occasion

to sacrifice for Himself. (4) The Levitical sacrifices were of animals whose blood and ashes could never really take away sin; Christ offered Himself as a true sacrifice. (5) All the Levitical offices were performed on earth, in connection with a material tabernacle, and therefore they could not affect higher relations; Christ entered the heavens, and carried the atonement into the highest regions, thus achieving spiritually what earthly high-priests could only attempt materially.

The great priestly work is the offering of a sacrifice, and Christ realises His priesthood in the sacrifice of Himself. This never appears as the propitiation of Divine wrath. It is viewed in a twofold relation —as a purification from sin, and as a ratification of the new covenant. The two effects are in no way contradictory. They run parallel. Nay, they help one another in together defeating the power of Satan. It was sin that broke the first covenant. The new covenant can only be held good when sin is purged away (ix. 15). Pfleiderer ascribed an entirely external character to the author's doctrine of redemption, holding that it meant no more than deliverance from the guilt of sin. That it includes this deliverance cannot be denied. The cleansing of "the conscience" (συνείδησιν) seems to point to such a result. But we cannot stay here. The writer asks if the sacrifice of Christ is not to "cleanse your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." (ver. 14). The latter part of this phrase is as truly connected with the sacrifice as the earlier part.*

* Pfleiderer admitted the force of this in his later work, *Urchristenthum*, p. 636.

Moreover, as Beyschlag points out, the idea of sanctification which our author associates with the sacrifice of Christ is never taken in the New Testament in a merely external manner; it always includes that change of character which makes consecration to God a reality and not an empty form, that holiness without which it is impossible to see God.†

In his interpretation of the sacrifice of Christ the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews comes nearer to a theory of the atonement than any other New Testament writer. He evidently connects this with the death of Christ, the shedding of whose blood is compared to that of the victim at the altar. He also alludes to the rites on the day of atonement. Christ was offered to "bear the sins of many" (ver. 28), reminding us of the scapegoat over the head of which the people's sins were confessed, so that it might carry them away to the demon in the wilderness. This approaches St. Paul's daring conception of our Lord being "made sin for us." The efficacy of Christ's sacrifice is not sought in this direction, however; it is looked for in the spirit with which He suffered. Animal sacrifices could not atone for sin, because they could not really please God. All that God delights in is an obedient will. Accordingly a body was prepared for Christ—*i.e.*, He became incarnate in order that He might come into the sphere of human obedience. He said, "Lo, I am come to do Thy will; . . . by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (x. 9, 10). His obedience

† *Neut. Theol.*, vol. ii., p. 317

in death was accepted by God as that most perfect surrender which is the very essence of sacrifice. He obeyed as a man, and His human sacrifice furnished the ground for passing over the sin of mankind in gracious forgiveness. At the same time, it is the most potent influence for consecrating and purifying all who follow Christ. We cannot dissociate these two results. In the Epistle they are inextricably mingled. God pardons in Christ a people who are to be made holy by Christ.

On the human side faith appears as the secret of all that is good and great. Unlike St. Paul, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews regards faith mainly as a spring of action, as the confidence in God which inspires heroism. The disheartening spirit which, by failing in faith and sinking back into despair, threatens to abandon the Christian course is severely reprobated. For those who yield to this tendency there is practically no hope of recovery; they have renounced the one saving means of grace. But for the loyal and patient there is the prospect of rest in the city of God (iv. 9; xiii. 14).

THE JOHANNINE TYPE

I. THE APOCALYPSE

Whatever line of interpretation we follow, or even if we hold that the key by means of which the secret of the elaborate symbolism of this book may be unlocked has not yet been found, one great idea flames out of the whole work and burns

itself into our imagination as we read the glowing pages. Clothed in the pageantry of Oriental imagery, which is alternately sombre and gorgeous, the dominant thought of the book is "God in history," God present in the midst of the moving drama of events, God actively directing the course of the tortuous current towards the grand consummation. The picture is painted on the largest possible canvas. The subject is not the salvation or ruin of the individual, but the judgment and final renewal of the world. God is here seen as "King of kings." The first lesson taught is that He is profoundly and very practically concerned with the history of mankind. That history is seen to be a dreadful conflict. It does not move on as a smooth process of evolution. There is blood, and fire, and fury in it. At present the evil seems to be dominant, and the ruling spirit Satan, the great red dragon. Therefore God must first come to judgment, and many woes are depicted in His train. But the prophecy is not pessimistic. After the overthrow of the evil, God will establish a new heaven and a new earth. The near future may be dark and threatening; beyond it lies the final future, bathed in the celestial radiance of unspeakable bliss. Thus the book is an allegorical picture of the great conflict in which the powers of evil and their earthly agents, bad men, especially bad ruling powers, will be judged and overthrown; so that, after all the toil, and strife, and agony of the process, in the end, while God is triumphant, His suffering servants will enter into a new era of peace and blessedness, an era of purity and perfection for the whole renovated world.

The work being concerned more with the social and historical region than with the internal and spiritual, the doctrines that affect personal religion are necessarily not prominent, and the more purely theological ideas only emerge casually and indirectly. It is not designed to teach theology, but to apply it to the destiny of mankind. The supreme right of God exercised in the government of the world is the dominant thought. He is emphatically the living, the eternal Creator and Sovereign. He appears on His throne (iv. 2, etc.), reigning, ruling, regulating all things. Next we see Jesus Christ highly exalted as the Leader of the Divine movement of history. He is the risen, glorified Christ. Both His humanity and His Divinity are apparent. The simple name "Jesus" is repeatedly used with great significance to point back to the life of our Lord on earth, and to remind us of the identity of personality persistent still in the state of exaltation (*e.g.*, xvii. 6; xxii. 16). The description of Him as One "like a Son of man" (i. 13–16) does not directly assert His real humanity, and might even be read in a Docetic sense; but it is plainly an allusion to the vision in Daniel (vii. 13), and must be taken therefore as symbolical of our Lord's humane gentleness and superiority to the prevalent world powers that are represented by ferocious brute beasts. His human relationship, however, is distinctly asserted: He is "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Rev. v. 5), and both "the root and the offspring of David" (xxii. 16). But the greatest emphasis is laid on His Divine nature. Peculiar titles attributed to God are also ascribed to Christ. Thus, after read-

ing "I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty" (i. 8), we find our Lord describing Himself as "the first and the last" (ver. 18; ii. 8), and saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (xxii. 13). He has "the keys of death and of Hades" (i. 18)—*i.e.*, a right to determine both who shall die, and who shall be raised again from the dead. In His exaltation He has a new name given Him, the full import of which He alone understands. This is no other than the name which reappears in the prologue of the fourth Gospel—"The Word of God" (ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, xix. 13), although we may observe a difference of usage in that, while here it comes before us as a title assigned to Christ after His exaltation in reward for His fidelity, in the Gospel it describes His eternal pre-existence. With these statements before us we cannot take the phrase "the beginning of the creation of God" (ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, iii. 14) to mean that Christ was Himself a creature. The interpretation "principle of creation" will not hold, as the Greek word (ἀρχὴ) is associated with the word that means "end" (τέλος), and therefore must signify "beginning" (xxii. 13). But this very association separates its subject from the contents of creation. He who is both the beginning and the end can only be the beginning in the sense that what reaches its consummation in Him is also founded in Him, and the thought must be connected with the Logos doctrine. Here we see clearly the idea of the personal pre-existence of Christ, as well as that of His relation

to creation. At the same time, even in this book, which so highly exalts His glory, that subordination to the Father which is apparent elsewhere throughout the New Testament is not forgotten. The very opening words of the introduction speak of "the revelation of Jesus Christ which God *gave* Him" (i. 1), and God is called "His God and Father" (ver. 6).

With reference to the work of Christ, His prophetic office is referred to when He is described as "the faithful witness" (i. 5; iii. 14), but His redeeming death is more fully dwelt upon. His saving work is regarded chiefly as an act of redemption. It consists primarily in deliverance from sin—He "loosed us from our sins" (i. 5). It also results in restoration to God—"He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father" (ver. 6). In the song of the redeemed they declare themselves to be purchased unto God (v. 9). This salvation is effected by means of the death of Christ—He is worthy who "was slain"; He purchased His people by "His blood" (*ibid.*). With this subject we must associate the peculiar name given to Christ. He is the Lamb (ἀρνίον).* Whether St. John is here alluding to the passover lamb; or whether the origin of the title is to be sought in that favourite passage with the early Christians, Isa. liii.; or whether, as is likely enough, both thoughts are in mind, perhaps because already combined in popular Christian teaching, it is clear that the Lamb is regarded sacrificially. The Lamb has been slain, and

* In the fourth Gospel St. John uses another name for Lamb (ἀμνός).

among Jews a slain lamb would certainly suggest a sacrifice. Further we can scarcely go. How the blood of the Lamb—*i.e.*, how the offering of Jesus Christ to God in death—can effect our redemption is a mystery left unexplained.

Our Lord's resurrection is clearly taught. He was dead, but He is alive for evermore. He is now emphatically "The Living One" (i. 18). He brings His grace to men by coming Himself into their hearts. He stands at the door and knocks, prepared to enter, and sup even with lukewarm Laodiceans if they will but receive Him (iii. 20). He is to come in power and glory for the overthrow of evil and the establishment of His kingdom. This doctrine of the Second Advent, often emerging in other New Testament writings, finds its fullest exposition in the Apocalypse. No date is given. Christ will come "as a thief" (ver. 3). Perhaps more than one return is thought of. The judgment of a guilty Church may not be contemporaneous with that of the world, as the judgment of Jerusalem is not with that of Rome. The coming of Christ is associated with a first resurrection, that of the martyrs, to be followed by a reign of a thousand years, after which a fresh outbreak of evil precedes the final victory.

According to Baur and his school, the Apocalypse is acutely anti-Pauline. But there is not a particle of evidence for the monstrous notions that the "evil men," "which call themselves apostles, and they are not" (ii. 2), are St. Paul and his companions; the Nicolaitans with their hateful works (ver. 6), St. Paul's

converts; and the "synagogue of Satan" (ver. 9), a Pauline Church! Still, the book wears a Jewish garb (*e.g.*, xi.), and often breathes a Jewish spirit. The temper attributed to the martyrs reminds us of the Maledictory Psalms, rather than of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount (vi. 10). The objection of the primitive Jewish Christians to eat meat offered to idols is here sanctioned, although it was not shared by St. Paul (ii. 14). But the association of this with fornication recalls the decree of the Jerusalem Church (Acts xv. 29); and St. John evidently stands with the Judæan Christians in this matter. He does not echo the narrow doctrines of the extreme party of St. James. Besides the redeemed Israelites there is "a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues," in white robes, attributing their salvation to God ("*our* God," they say) and the Lamb (Rev. vii. 9, 10). The leaves of the tree of life are "for the healing of the *nations*" (xxii. 2). He that will is invited to take the water of life freely (ver. 17). Judgment is to be according to works (ii. 23; iii. 2). But this is also taught by St. Paul; and although the Apocalypse does not refer to justification by faith, it appeals to "the grace of the Lord Jesus" (xxii. 21). There is not a word in commendation of the Jewish ritual. No temple is to be found in the New Jerusalem.

II. THE GOSPEL AND THE EPISTLES

Seeing that the four Gospels were all written later than St. Paul's Epistles, they may be considered to belong to the third period of New Testament teaching. The writers of the Synoptics, however, have so persistently suppressed their own individuality in bending themselves to the great task of painting the portrait of their Master that, while we resort to the three first Gospels for the words of Jesus and the facts of His life, we cannot look to them for that interpretation of ideas which is known as theology. This is their crowning merit. The facts themselves are of such profound significance that the simple record of them, interwoven as it is with the sayings of Christ, constitutes the most vital part of the New Testament. Here we learn what the historical Jesus was. Two of the Gospels (Matthew and Luke) inform us of His supernatural birth from the Virgin Mary; they all give graphic accounts of His teaching and miracle-working, devoting great attention to the last scenes, and thus accentuating the significance of His death, and bearing emphatic witness to His resurrection. These are the root facts out of which Christian theology has sprung. To some extent, indeed, personal ideas and aims may be detected in the Synoptic writers. Thus, while St. Mark is content to set down his rugged narrative of the wonderful life with scarcely a comment, St. Matthew reveals himself as the Jewish Christian, delighting in the fulfilment of prophecy after the manner of St. Peter; and St. Luke is

Pauline, glowing with the universalism illustrated in the grace of God bestowed on the poor, the sinful, and the heathen. But these traits only emerge casually. With the fourth Evangelist the case is very different. St. John, as we have seen,* does not hesitate to insert his own reflections in the course of his narrative, and that with considerable freedom. Therefore we can study his theology in his Gospel as well as in his Epistles.

The fundamental agreement between the representation of our Lord's teaching in the fourth Gospel and that in the Synoptics, to which attention was directed in an earlier part of this book,† vastly simplifies the study of Johannine theology. That study has generally consisted for the most part in an examination of the discourses ascribed to our Lord in St. John's narrative. These, however, have been already looked at in their right place among the teachings of Christ. They only touch Johannine theology indirectly by throwing light on the mind of the one disciple, who, as far as we know, was alone capable of absorbing and reproducing them, and who seems to have translated them into his own style of thought and language. It is in his independent statements that we must find the ideas which can be ascribed immediately to the inspired thinking of St. John himself.

It has been common to call the theology of St. John mystical, a true characterisation of its spirit, but not of its method. As it has often been remarked, St. John is contemplative rather than speculative.

* Pages 15, 16. † See page 38.

His mind instinctively broods over the deepest truths of the spiritual life, or soars with delight into the highest regions of Divine existence, and in all his meditation he seizes ideas in their antithetical positive and negative relations without toiling through a tedious process of syllogistic reasoning. But there is one point at which he breaks with the mystic. He does not derive his knowledge of God from intuition, but finds it in the historical facts of the earthly life of Jesus Christ. He even denies the existence of any immediate knowledge of God, and asserts that the only way in which God can be known is by means of the revelation of Christ (John i. 18), through that incarnate Word of which he and his companions have had ocular, sensible experience—"that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness)," etc. (1 John i. 1, 2). This is the direct contradiction of the mystical method. Nevertheless, it arrives at richer results of Divine knowledge than any acquired by the process of subjective intuition. The man who knew Jesus Christ best on earth, and who confessed that he had obtained his knowledge of the Father from the Son, has given us our highest and clearest ideas of God. Seeing the Father in the Son, St. John perceives that the very being of God is light—*i.e.*, true goodness (1 John i. 5); love (iv. 8); and life (John v. 26). These three Johannine attributes of God blend and interact; but the central one is that on which the Apostle lays the greatest stress. God is love essentially by nature. All

the action of God in redemption is traced back to the infinite fountains of Divine love. And this is not an intuitional truth, or a deduction from reflection upon the writer's own nature as the Apostle of love, which it might be if it were only got in subjective meditation. It is a result of the objective revelation in the person of Jesus Christ. It is a transcription of the character of our Lord by His most intimate disciple, and an unhesitating ascription of it to God.

The theology of St. John, then, is emphatically Christo-centric. The person and life of our Lord constitute the heart and root and source of all the Johannine religious ideas. The Apostle declares that the object with which he wrote his Gospel was that his readers might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," and so might "have life in His name" (John xx. 31). In 1 John the supreme requisite is to believe in the name of God's Son Jesus Christ (1 John iv. 2, 3), to confess the Son (ii. 23), etc. The Messiahship of Jesus is prominent throughout. The universalism of the Apostle never blinds him to the Jewish form of the Christian revelation.

In writing of the person of our Lord, St. John brings the truths concerning His Divine nature into the greatest prominence. It is in the fourth Gospel that we have the fullest presentation of the Divinity of Christ anywhere to be found in the Bible. The Evangelist's version of our Lord's own words is evidently determined with a special view to this end; for he has selected those utterances that bring out the higher nature of Christ and recast them so as to form a unique portrait of the incarnate Son of

God. His own comments and direct statements on this subject are most distinct and emphatic.

First, we have St. John's description of the Logos (ὁ λόγος), *i.e.*, the Word, in the introduction to his Gospel. This is a peculiarly Johannine thought. St. John never represents our Lord to have called Himself the Word. Yet he introduces the name abruptly, on the evident assumption that it is familiar to his readers. Since the very same title was in use among the Alexandrian Jews for the Divine mind as the Mediator of creation, it is most reasonable to suppose that the Evangelist, or perhaps some other thinkers before him, took it over into Christian teaching and applied it to Jesus Christ. But though the title seems to have come from Hellenic sources, the ideas attached to it were not borrowed from the same region, for St. John's Logos is very different from the Logos of Philo. They may be contrasted in four important particulars. Philo's Logos is (1) "reason," rather than "Word"; (2) really impersonal, though allegorically personified; (3) not to be thought of as incarnate; (4) never identified with the Messiah. But St. John's Logos is (1) the "Word," as the context proves; (2) a Person; (3) incarnate; (4) identified with the Messiah. The thoughts which lie behind the title are rather those of the creative word of Genesis, the revealing "word of the Lord" in prophecy, and the sacred "name of the Lord" so frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. Using the Alexandrian term, and reading into it Old Testament ideas, perhaps with associations gathered from later Palestinian Judaism, St. John calmly identifies the awful Word of God

with Jesus Christ. He does not say that the Word was manifest in Christ. He says, "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory" (John i. 14); and in the passage already quoted from 1 John, the Apostle tells us that it is the Word of whom he and his fellow-disciples have had such close corporeal experience.

Now St. John asserts certain great facts concerning the Word. First, He was pre-mundane. The phrase "in the beginning" (ἐν ἀρχῇ), a manifest allusion to the opening words of Genesis, carries us back to the commencement of all things. In that distant dawn of creation the Word was existing and present. The language of the Evangelist does not affirm absolute eternity; but on the other hand it drops no hint as to a beginning of the Word. At the first appearance of any created thing the Word is found to be in existence. Then He was in intimate relation and close converse with God—"face to face with God" (πρὸς τὸν Θεόν). Next, it is stated that He was Divine in nature. He "was God"—true God, not merely God-like. The term "God" is here used as a predicate of quality, accentuating the nature of its object rather than the individual personality, by means of the absence of the article (Θεός, not ὁ Θεός). St. John never employs the term "God" of Christ in the subject of a sentence. It is difficult to grasp his exact meaning. But probably this usage, combined with the phrase "the Word was face to face with God," is intended to suggest a distinction of personality. Further, the Evangelist declares that the Word was the agent of creation. All things

were made by means of Him. (δι' αὐτοῦ). Life was inherent in Him. Apparently the Evangelist is here referring to the life of nature, as he is following immediately on the mention of creation and preceding his allusion to the revelation in prophecy. This life of nature, being derived from the Word, was the light of men, although its shining in the darkness of the world was not comprehended, so that a personal manifestation of the Word became necessary.

While the term "the Word" is thus prominent in the prologue of the Gospel, elsewhere St. John usually refers to the Divine nature of our Lord under the title "Son of God." Jesus is "*the* Son of God" (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ), a term which implies exclusiveness.

More distinctly, He is "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (John i. 18).* This phrase makes it quite certain that the idea of Divine Sonship is personal, not official, as it was among the Jews, who called the Messiah the Son of God without thereby recognising His Divinity. It also distinguishes the Sonship of Christ from that of Christians or men generally who are taught to regard God as their Father. Christ's Sonship is the only true, perfect sonship, that with the full nature of the Father present in the Son. Lastly, the concluding words of the phrase, being in the present tense, indicate that the incarnation did not involve any

* Authorities differ on this text, some preferring the reading "the only begotten God," a phrase that is not in harmony with New Testament usage. The expression "only begotten Son" is found in John iii. 16, and 1 John iv. 9.

separation between Christ and His Father. He always enjoyed the consciousness of His Father's love and nearness; He did not lose this joy when He came among us. In entering this world He did not leave heaven: He brought heaven with Him. It is in accordance with this conception that St. John does not follow St. Paul in representing the incarnation as a humiliation; the glory of Christ is not diminished by His human limitations, because this glory does not consist in external show and splendour (ver. 14). It is the glory of goodness, and the goodness of the Son is not less but more apparent in His earthly life. Similarly St. John quotes words of our Lord which recognise the death of Christ as His glorification (xiii. 31, 32).

There can be no doubt that St. John taught the reality of our Lord's human nature. "The Word became flesh"—*i.e.*, human (i. 14). According to 1 John the denial of the incarnation is the very spirit of antichrist (1 John iv. 3). St. John was evidently contending against the nascent Docetism of his day and locality. He had found all his knowledge of God in the visible, human Christ; and to endeavour to dissipate the image of his Lord by representing it to be no real presence was intolerable. It has been said that St. John only contends for a fleshly body in which the Logos dwelt. No doubt the Apostle is so complete a Jew that he cannot think of a perfect human presence excepting in terms of body. The flesh is with him, as with other Jews, the name of the whole humanity, because to people who think in the concrete the most natural way of representing human nature

is by means of its outward and visible properties. But St. John does not deny the existence of a human soul in Jesus. His narrative contains several references to it (*e.g.*, John x. 11, 15, 17; 1 John iii. 16), and even his record of the phrase "the Son of Man" implies an acceptance of the reality of our Lord's human nature.

It is the teaching of St. John that the supreme purpose of the advent of Christ was the manifestation of the glory of God in the overthrow of the dominion of Satan and the deliverance of the world from the ruin of sin. Sin is lawlessness (1 John iii. 4), not as a formal transgression of the Hebrew Torah, but as a wilful disregard of the supreme law of God — disobedience against God Himself. The devil rules the world in its sin (v. 19). St. John does not echo St. Paul's treatment of Satanic influence in connecting it with physical ills, disease, and death, so that it could be used by God and the Church as an agent of chastisement. The other aspect of Satanic power, the spiritual dominion of wickedness—which, indeed, is recognised by St. Paul—comes out strongly in the fourth Evangelist. He sees a great conflict in progress between light and darkness, Christ and Satan; and the whole scheme of his Gospel seems to be arranged so as to present this to us in a series of vivid, dramatic pictures. It has even been suggested that we have here a Gnostic division of the human race into two essentially opposite classes—the children of God, and the children of the devil.* But, although

* See p. 49, where this theory is considered in relation to our Lord's teachings recorded by St. John.

some such division is recognised in the present condition of mankind (iii. 10), the Gnostic fatalism which would make it necessary and eternal, because constitutional, almost physiological, is directly contrary to St. John's ideas. The Apostle proclaims God's love to the world (*e.g.*, John iii. 16), and makes it clear that the gospel is for all mankind (*e.g.*, 1 John iv. 14, 15). His is no gospel confined to a favoured race or order of men. In regard to the scope of redemption, St. John is as much a universalist as St. Paul.

While redemption is regarded negatively as deliverance from condemnation and destruction in the cleansing away of sin and the abolition of the dominion of Satan, positively it appears as the gift of life. The idea of life in Christ—set before us in contrast to the doom of destruction—is not to be understood metaphorically as future bliss; it represents the real gift of such energies and powers as are comprehended in the notion of actual vitality. This biological conception of salvation is a distinctive feature of Johannine theology, which is thereby strongly differentiated in form from the forensic theology of St. Paul—in form, but not in essence, since the same idea is also found in Pauline teaching side by side with the legal conceptions of justification, and without any contradiction (*e.g.*, Rom. vi. 23). In St. John this is much more emphatic and characteristic. Accordingly the reception of the blessings of salvation is the result of the begetting of a new life in us by God. The Christian is "begotten of God" (1 John v. 1, 18); and Christians are in an especial sense "children of God," who are

growing into the likeness of Christ (iii. 2, 3), continuous union with whom keeps His people from sin. Thus St. John says, "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not" (ver. 6). This cannot be affirmed absolutely of our present state, since the Apostle has just before said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (i. 8). It must mean, then, that just in proportion as we abide in Christ are we free from sin.

Now St. John is most clear and emphatic in the statement that these vast results are brought about by God out of pure love for the world. Or, if more may be said, this will only go to show how completely God wills the work of redemption. Thus so far is St. John from hinting at the existence of any discord among the Divine attributes, justice opposed to mercy, etc., that he even brings in the faithfulness and righteousness of God as grounds on which He forgives the penitent, saying, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (ver. 9).

St. John agrees with the universal testimony of the Apostles that this Divine work is carried out by Jesus Christ. Because God loved the world and desired to save it from ruin, He sent His Son into the world. Thus the incarnation is attributed to the saving purpose of God. With the Apostle this is essential. The denial of the incarnation is fatal. Nevertheless, St. John is not satisfied to rest on this fact alone, sublimely beneficent as it is. He carries us on to the death of Christ, saying, "The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (ver. 7). The association of

the two words "blood" and "cleanseth" makes it clear that the Apostle has a sacrificial idea in his mind. He must therefore be thinking of the blood shed in death which purifies from the stain of sin by its sacrificial efficacy. He does not say how this can be. It is enough that he has the analogy of Hebrew ritual in his mind to fall back upon, although he makes no direct allusion to it. Similarly he teaches that the life-consecration of our Lord, symbolised by His baptism, would not be sufficient without His death, for He "came by water and blood . . . not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood" (v. 6).

It is quite in accordance with these statements concerning the process that the result should be called a "propitiation" (ἱλασμός). Thus St. John writes, "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (ii. 2); and again, "God sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (iv. 10). But when we recollect the Apostle's reiterated assertion of God's love for the world, and observe that the second of these references to propitiation is actually prefaced by the mention of the Divine love in the words "Not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son," etc., showing that the immediate cause of the propitiation was this love of God, we must see that St. John is at the very antipodes of the heathenish position, according to which the animosity of an unfriendly divinity is allayed by the presentation of a coveted sacrifice. Nothing of the kind can be thought of. Then the Apostle must be contemplating the propitiation in

some other aspects. What is this? Although clearly it is not to move God to be kindly disposed, seeing that God Himself provides it simply because He is already moved by love, still the sin needs to be cleansed, and the propitiation is to effect this end. Perhaps, then, we might say that it comes nearer the idea of an expiation. It is to do away with the injurious effects of sin, and especially the guilt, which, while it is not blotted out, acts as an effectual hindrance to God's good intention, neutralising His grace. Even after this great propitiation in the blood of Christ has been effected, there is still a further work for our Lord to do in delivering us from the ruin of sin. He is our Advocate (παράκλητος) with the Father, interceding for us. Again, it is difficult for us to see what room there is for this advocacy and intercession, seeing that God is already most desirous to forgive and save. But we must understand that the result of the work of Christ is the same as that of a persuading intercession; it is needed in order that we may be set right with God. That work our Lord is doing now. It is a continuous intercession carried on by the exalted Christ—a truth also expressed by St. Paul (*e.g.*, Rom. viii. 34) and in Hebrews (vii. 25). Finally, while the blessings of the saving work of Christ are free to all mankind and designed for the benefit of the whole world, they can only be received on certain conditions. First, there must be confession of sin, if sin is to be forgiven (1 John i. 9). Then we must have faith in Christ, if we would receive the life of Christ. Faith is represented by St. John on its

receptive side. It is not the reception of an idea, however, but the opening up of the soul for Christ to come in; so that "he that hath the Son hath the life" (v. 12).

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